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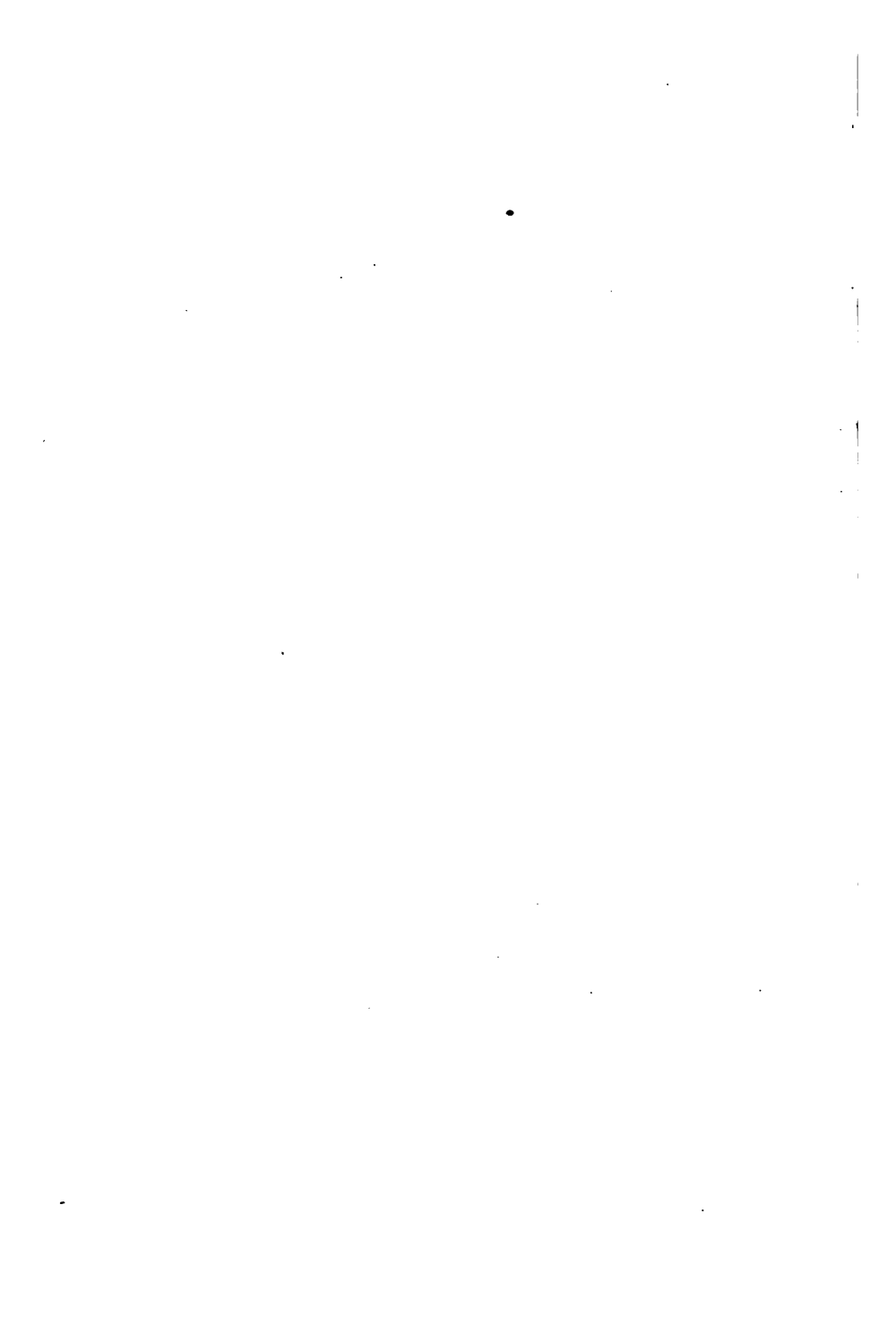
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Dear Dr. Finley, It is with
much of a hie to send,
we write it go congratulations
in a most successful
year and in having
secured a place in the
hearts of an entire state.

Lee Jarden

Dec. 25, 1915

NBO
Borden





Ruby Floyd's Temptation

AND OTHER

STORIES ABOUT SCHOOLS

BY

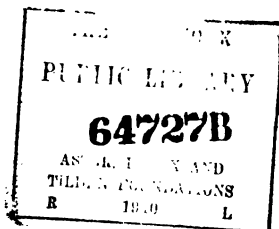
C. W. BARDEEN

Editor of the School Bulletin



SYRACUSE, N. Y.

C. W. BARDEEN, PUBLISHER



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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Ruby Floyd's temptation.....	9
The tenth commandment.....	47
The hold-up.....	81
A merry soul.....	111
A matter of marking.....	143
Three months notice.....	197

RUBY FLOYD'S TEMPTATION

RUBY FLOYD'S TEMPTATION

I

"How's Mr. Harwood getting on?" asked Mr. Appleton.

"That's what we came to see you about," replied Mr. Tynan, president of the Willowford board. "He is a fine man, a gentleman, a scholar, high-minded, just, generous, a pattern for our boys and an asset to the community: and yet—". Mr. Tynan turned to his colleague to complete the reply.

"Some way," said Mr. Wilbor, doubtfully, "the school lacks vim, force, go."

"Our boys play base-ball and football pretty well," continued Mr. Tynan, "but they don't win; at the pinch they don't

put in that last pound that counts. I think it is so in their studies: they do well but not surpassing well. They are too leisurely. They are ruminants: oxen have gone out of fashion; now-a-days we must have horses."

"Or automobiles," suggested Mr. Wilbor.

"Do you want to try a new man?" asked Mr. Appleton.

"No, indeed," they both protested warmly; and Mr. Tynan added, "We should want to keep Mr. Harwood in town if he didn't teach at all, just for his personal influence. But our preceptress resigns to marry, and we wondered if you couldn't give us a woman who would inject into the school the vital force, energy, enthusiasm which it seems to lack."

"It is asking a good deal of her," mused Mr. Appleton.

"We will pay a good deal for it. We will pay a thousand dollars."

"If you could make it twelve hundred I have a possibility in mind."

"Tell us about her."

"Ruby Floyd has been preceptress at Wolf's Falls for three years, but it is too limited a place for her. She is a rare woman, an exceedingly rare teacher. She has everything that makes a woman marriageable, but there was a romance in her school days. It had not reached an engagement, and when an accident took the young fellow's life she made no claim at the funeral to be more than any other mourner; she did not visit his grave, though she often walked by it; she has never spoken to any one of her bereavement; but he has been to her the one man; she has set her face resolutely against the thought

of marriage, so that she has made teaching her life work."

"She may change her mind," suggested Mr. Wilbor.

"That is always possible, but a suitor would have a good deal to contend with. I knew the fellow—a bright, able, ambitious, high-minded boy of nineteen. How many of us have realized our ideals at nineteen? Have you, Mr. Tynan?"

Mr. Tynan paused before replying. "I would not go back to nineteen and take my chances of coming out as well as I have," he said sadly, "but I have not realized my ideals."

"To Ruby Floyd her lover is still the man who has realized his ideals of nineteen. The average man fades beside him. She is a wonderfully beautiful woman. Her name fits her; she has the rich, glowing

nature of the gem, with astonishing force and energy. I have seen a class go out of her room so tingling with enthusiasm that I looked to her to see if it had not been drawn out of her and left her flaccid, and yet she would still herself be brimming over."

"That seems to be the sort of woman we want," nodded Mr. Tynan to Mr. Wilbor. Then to Mr. Appleton, "All right as to family and manners, of course?"

Mr. Appleton smiled. "You don't get three such in a thousand."

The two men consulted for a moment. "We won't let that extra two hundred stand in the way," said Mr. Tynan. "You may send her to us."

II

Mr. Appleton had not thought it wise to tell Miss Floyd why she had been selected

for Willowford: it might make her conscious. She could be depended on to be herself anywhere, and herself was likely to fill the need without being warned what the need was. So she came expecting to find a good school and pleasant surroundings. She found both. There were among the teachers and pupils co-operation, confidence, candor, the relations of a well-bred family. So far from feeling that she was to reform the school she wrote to Mr. Appleton after the first week that she was not sure she could maintain her part in so delightful an organization.

As days passed, however, she became aware of a certain looseness of execution. For instance, morning exercises hardly ever began at prompt nine. Mr. Harwood looked about before beginning and waited a little for all to be seated. Once it was

full five minutes past when he came in, having been detained to consult with some one. When the bell rang for the school to rise the pupils straggled up one by one, instead of springing up as a unit. After recess it would be minutes before the room was quiet. The whole machine needed tightening up. It wobbled.

As this became impressed upon her she wondered what she could do to help matters. In her own room there was no trouble. She was always on the dot herself, both in beginning and in closing a recitation, and she made the lesson so interesting that there was the closest attention. But the schedule did not give her charge of the main room for any period, and she could affect the school as a whole only by extreme promptness herself. Her example had some effect but not enough

to tighten up perceptibly the general laxity. She saw that no effective change could be made except through Mr. Harwood.

III

Mr. Harwood was difficult to approach with criticism. As Ruby became acquainted with him she began to feel a certain awe, not of his manner but of his rich nature. She had never known a man of such breadth of knowledge. It was not that he carried in mind a multitude of facts but that all the facts that came to him were so related. Once to test him she laughingly asked a score of questions from one of the little pocket compendiums of statistics that are handy to have at hand. He had not memorized any of them and he did not pretend to give exact figures but he answered them all approximately. Thus,

when she asked the distance from Singapore to Tokio he replied, "Why, as the map stands in my mind it must be about one-third of the coast line of Asia north and south, say 35 degrees of latitude, say 2500 miles in an air line, or 3000 miles by boat." The real distance given was 3025 miles, a single fact, but Mr. Harwood's method of approximation would apply to all distances.

This method of approximation he was constantly applying to any new statement presented as a fact. One day at teachers meeting in the course of a discussion of geometry Euclid's textbook was spoken of, and he asked if any of them had information about Professor Playfair. Miss Stettin told an anecdote she had read that Professor Playfair and his son were taking supper with Queen Victoria, when she reached out for the last piece of bread

and took it; whereupon the boy pointed a finger at her, and called, "Piggy! Piggy!" The father was embarrassed, but the Queen said, "You are quite right, my little man, I shouldn't have taken the last piece." Others had seen the same story in the newspapers and thought it an excellent example of Victoria's sturdy common sense.

But Mr. Harwood was amused. "In the first place," he said, "the Queen did not take supper in the New England way familiar to the author of the story. Her evening meal was dinner, served at nine o'clock, in great state, when no guest reached for anything, and there was never a last piece. But if by chance this had happened at an informal lunch, though still the single piece of bread would have been impossible, and if the more impossible

taking of the last piece by the Queen had occurred, we may be sure that no son of Professor Playfair would have been brought up to point 'Piggy! Piggy!' even to a brother or a sister at home, much less to the Queen in her palace; and if even this impossibility were overcome, we may be still surer the Queen, who was a noted stickler for forms, would have made a very different reply."

"I am so overwhelmed by the exposure of the ridiculousness of this story," said Miss Floyd, "that I hesitate to tell an anecdote I once read about Professor Playfair."

"What was it?" asked Mr. Harwood.

"When he was tutor to the Prince of Wales, afterward King Edward Third, they were passing through a manufactory where there was a vat of molten lead. 'That is very hot,' Professor Playfair said,

'yet you could plunge your hand into it without being burned.' 'Do you advise me to try it?' asked the Prince. Professor Playfair took the boy's hand, examined it to see that it was covered by normal perspiration, and replied, 'Yes, you may do so safely.' The prince plunged his hand in to the wrist and withdrew it unharmed."

"I don't know that the story is true," replied Mr. Harwood, "but it bears the marks of probability. The normal moisture about the hand when it is suddenly plunged into molten metal forms a coating of steam which is a non-conductor and prevents the metal from touching or burning the hand. It was a serious matter for Professor Playfair to permit so important a personage to make so serious an experiment. On the other hand, if he was

not willing to test the truth of what he had just said, the boy would lose faith in his teacher. Certainly if the story is true it reflects great credit on both Professor Playfair and the Prince."

This habit of testing the probability of every statement was of immense influence in the school. The pupils learned to connect their bits of information. One of them said, "Mr. Harwood's knowledge makes me think of a cobweb. Anything untrue that touches it jars it, and his mind rushes down to the point of contact to see what is wrong about it." They learned from him that in arithmetic there were five fundamental rules, and that the fifth, the rule of common sense, was to be applied to all problems. If in the answer flour cost twenty dollars a barrel or a pear tree was sixty feet high there was something

wrong either in the statement or in the solution. They learned to apply this test to all their work.

IV

But this was only a detail of his grasp, and still more remarkable was his power to bring all his knowledge to bear upon whatever occurred. To Ruby, impulsive and when emergency arose doing first and thinking afterward, it seemed impossible for him to be disturbed or hurried. Once during regents examination when she was in his office the papers on a desk in the next room took fire from a large lens carelessly left in the sunlight. Ruby rushed to the table and would have smothered the flames with a rug, but in a calm voice he checked her. "Don't do that," he said; "burning papers scatter and all those re-

gents answers on the floor might catch fire."

Ruby obeyed, but wondered to see him coolly surveying the room. His glance fell on a red fire-extinguisher that neither had ever before observed. "This will be better," he said; and without hurrying he took it down, read the instructions as coolly as if it were the morning paper, followed them, and turned on a stream of carbonic acid gas that instantly extinguished the fire. It was a lesson Ruby needed and that she never forgot. But there were so many of these lessons in so many directions that she found it hard to say to him, "If only you would do things on time, Mr. Harwood."

His dilatoriness was based on conscious strength: it was that of the skilful boatman who lets himself drift toward the

falls because he has only to grasp the oars and by powerful strokes pull himself out of danger. Yet there is a point at which it is no longer safe even for a strong oarsman to drift, and Ruby felt that he was not watchful enough. Not only in the school but in his own work he put off till tomorrow what should have been done today. When he opened the morning mail he sorted it into baskets, marked Immediate, Reflection, Deferred. The latter two baskets were often unlooked at for a fortnight, and even the Immediate basket might remain untouched for a week. Inquiries from parents would remain unanswered, notices that should have been read to the school would be overlooked, important engagements would be neglected, invitations would be left without acknowledgement. As she could do so without

seeming to meddle Ruby protested against this neglect; once she offered to take charge of his correspondence and remind him each morning of what must be attended to that day. He laughed and declined. "The fact is, Miss Floyd," he said, "so many of these letters take care of themselves before I get around to replying to them that it seems a waste of energy to answer them till I am forced to." He seemed incorrigible.

V

Besides, she had opposition. Adelaide Fleming was the first assistant. The board gave her that title because when she was first employed they did not want to displace the preceptress whom Ruby followed; but many of the duties of the preceptress had been assigned to her, and when the preceptress resigned it was expected that

she would succeed to the title: Mr. Harwood had recommended it. As we have seen, the board thought it necessary to infuse new blood. Miss Fleming was not only disappointed in failing of promotion but chagrined to see the new teacher paid a half more than either she or the former preceptress had received.

But this disappointment and this chagrin found no expression. She greeted Ruby cordially, helped her to take up her predecessor's work, introduced her with generous appreciation, and invariably spoke of her with admiration. This was characteristic of Miss Fleming. Everything she did she did perfectly, even with the art that conceals art. Everything about her seemed simple and natural. She was exquisitely dressed but always plainly; there was never an unnecessary flounce or ribbon; the fit

was admirable, the color pleasing, the effect becoming. This last adjective just expresses it: her clothes became her; you thought not what a fine gown that was but what a fine woman was wearing it.

She was tall, of good form and figure, erect, stately almost to statuesqueness. Her countenance in repose was haughty, but it occasionally lit up into a smile so radiant that those on whom it fell seemed bathed in it. Parents as well as pupils would remark, "They call Miss Fleming proud, but she is always very nice to me," with manifest self-congratulation that they had the qualities to elicit this unusual favor.

As a teacher she was considered a wonder. She was a Vassar graduate, but of only medium standing and with no broad backgrounds like Mr. Harwood. But she

was painstaking. In her subjects she collated the questions at past regents examinations, put each and those allied to it upon a separate sheet of paper, found an answer to each in the textbook, and marked the pages of the book on the paper and the numbers of the questions on the margin of the book. As new books came out she collated them with her questions, adding new information or points of view or explanations or illustrations. In the class she made notes of each day's recitations. If a happy answer was made or a new thought struck out, she wrote it upon the paper so that it could be used next time. If a pupil failed in the day's lesson she marked his name in the margin of the book, called him up upon it the next day and the next and the next if necessary till he showed that he knew it thoroughly, making the

weak places the strongest. To her pupils the regents examinations always seemed easy: they had had much harder drill in the class.

Originally she had been notedly prompt and exact as a teacher, but after Mr. Harwood came she fell into his ways. It was not a servile imitation. She saw that she had been giving her pupils the skeleton of their subjects while he was clothing his with flesh and life. Her pupils were committing facts; his were learning to think. She encouraged discussion in her classes, permitted diversions, let her periods run over, developed an avoidance of all that seemed machine-like. She not only imitated Mr. Harwood's laxity, she carried it further.

So when Ruby pleaded with Mr. Harwood for more rigorous methods, Miss

Fleming was always ready to oppose. She was sure to be present, for she was still, as she had been before Ruby came, his right hand. In fact, though no signs of affection were allowed to appear in school, it was generally understood that Mr. Harwood and Miss Fleming were likely to marry. No engagement had been announced, but they were always classed together in the social affairs of the village and seated together when invited to meals. It seemed a fitting match. They made a fine-looking pair, and the common feeling in the village was that each was fortunate to find another such splendid creature.

So it happened one night after there had been a long discussion over reforms Ruby had wanted to introduce, and Mr. Harwood had yielded to Miss Fleming's protests, that Ruby, out of patience with

the first assistant's influence, cried out to herself, "How I hate her!"

Then she buried her burning face under the bed-clothes, for she knew that meant, "How I love Mr. Harwood!" She did not put it into words even in thought, but she shrivelled with humiliation. Love a man who had never given her a glance of affection, who was practically promised to another whom he loved devotedly! She saw herself on the brink of an unimagined chasm. She turned her back upon it and fled.

VI

May 28 was Mr. Harwood's birthday, and there were public exercises connected with the unveiling of his portrait, which the members of the board had subscribed for and presented to the school. When the curtain was drawn Miss Fleming sur-

prised the audience by coming forward and asking if she might add a personal tribute of her own, and to the wonderment and delight of the audience she read these verses:

TO KENNETH HARWOOD

By Adelaide Fleming

*Such is thy form, dear master, but where
find*

*A hand or colors to express thy mind?
A mind unmoved by every vulgar fear,
In a false world that dares to be sincere;
Wise without art; without ambition great;
Though firm yet pliant; active though
sedate;*

*With all the richest store of learning fraught
Yet better still by native prudence taught;
That, fond the griefs of the distressed to
heal,*

*Can pity frailties it could never feel;
 That, when misfortune sued, ne'er sought
 to know
 What sect, what party, whether friend or
 foe;
 That, fixed on equal virtue's temperate
 laws,
 Despises calumny, and shuns applause;
 That, to its own perfections singly blind,
 Would for another think this praise de-
 signed.*

The applause was tumultuous. The lines were so graceful, the thought so true, that members of the board and parents gathered about Miss Fleming to press her hand. As for Mr. Harwood, tears stood in his eyes, and as the room became quiet he murmured, "Adelaide, that is undeserved but beautiful." Nobody before had heard him call her by the first

name. It is doubtful if he had ever called her so in private, for her face became suffused and tears welled from her eyes. It was a great triumph.

VII

Ruby had joined mechanically in the applause, but she was puzzled. She was passionately fond of poetry. She was not only familiar with the standard works but she browsed over ephemeral verse, sometimes finding in a magazine or even in a newspaper a bit of heart throb that was genuine. She had even read through consecutively enough to test all the thousands of pages in Chalmers's "Works of the English poets from Chaucer to Cowper", finding oases here and there that more than repaid her for traversing the arid deserts.

Now these verses of Adelaide's seemed

familiar. As she tried to recall them she felt impressed that they were in one of these twenty-one thick double-columned Chalmers volumes: in fact she had a vague memory of them as being at the upper left-hand corner of a left-hand page. It seemed incredible, yet the impression was so strong that after the exercises she went up to the library. She guessed that the period would be the early part of the eighteenth century, and she searched the fifteenth and the sixteenth volumes in vain. Then she went back to the thirteenth with like result, and took up the fourteenth rather hopelessly. Mallet, Akenside, Gray, Lyttleton—sure enough, there it was on page 174, in the upper left-hand corner as she had pictured it. "Verses to be written under a picture of Mr. Poyntz", unchanged except the first line.

In her impetuosity she started to carry the volume to Mr. Harwood's office and denounce the thief, but fortunately there were stairs, and by the time she had descended she had decided to think it over first. So she locked the book in her desk and went off for a long walk.

The temptation was almost overwhelming. If Adelaide would parade a theft like this, of what other duplicity she must have been capable. What a false nature had been masked under her guileless countenance. What a calamity it would be for Mr. Harwood to marry her and discover, as he sometime must, what a sepulchre she whited. She need not say a word. It was only necessary to lay the volume on Mr. Harwood's desk, the passage marked. It was due him to deceive him.

But Ruby could not long beguile herself. She had no official duty in the matter, as where in "Roderick Hume" Mary Lowe was compelled to show that an essay offered for a prize was a plagiarism. These verses were a personal offering to Mr. Harwood. Adelaide had presented them not as a teacher but as a friend. It had been done publicly, but not as an exercise of the school. "Who am I," Ruby reflected, "that I should sneak around to interfere between two other teachers? Suppose I happened to discover that Adelaide's teeth were false, should I go to Mr. Harwood and say, 'You admire Miss Fleming's upper teeth, but she keeps them in a tumbler at night'? What would he think of me? What should I think of myself?"

The more she reflected the more ashamed

she felt that she should have been tempted to expose her fellow-teacher. She believed it must be due to the jealousy she had been so humiliated to perceive. Before she got home to supper she had resolved not only to keep her discovery a secret but to take extra pains to be generous toward Adelaide, to atone for the meanness of even contemplating exposing her.

So after school the next day when she had gone to Mr. Harwood's office on an errand and he asked, "Weren't Miss Fleming's verses beautiful?" she replied warmly, "Indeed they were, and charmingly read."

She said it sincerely and she came out of the office her face aglow with the kindly feeling toward Adelaide that always accompanies a generous act one volunteers.

VIII

Excited as she was by her triumph after the poem was read, Adelaide's quick eye had caught Ruby's upward glance as though trying to recall something, and her guilty conscience made her suspect her theft might be discovered. So after school next day she went up to the library, to the shelf where the Chalmers set lay. Volume xiv was missing. Her fears confirmed she went down to Miss Floyd's room with her usual stately step but with far from her usual calm feelings. The desk was locked, but she was in no mood to be impeded by that. She took out of her pocket a ring of four keys. None of them fitted but one turned the lock part way. She used a lead pencil as a lever and twisted till the lock was broken. Inside the desk was the missing fourteenth volume. She

lifted it and opened at the place marked by a sheet of paper. It was at page 174, the verses she had stolen. Ruby Floyd had detected her and exposed her.

There was no more thought of the state-ly. She flew like a fury to Mr. Harwood's office to see if she could save anything from the ruins. She met Ruby just coming out, and misinterpreted her glow of triumph over temptation as exultation at having torn off her rival's mask. Without replying to Ruby's greeting she rushed into the office and slammed the door.

Mr. Harwood could hardly believe his eyes. Adelaide was panting with rage, almost dumb because so many passions sought to find utterance at once. "That spy! that cat! that viper!" she cried, "that shame to womanhood! that lying, treacherous, snooping, perfidious tell-tale! I did

copy the verses but they expressed my meaning; I really felt it; and this abject, despicable disgrace to her sex goes prying over the whole library till she finds verses that somebody wrote two-hundred years ago and comes to you to disgrace me."

Mr. Harwood did not interrupt her. He was above all things an observer and this was a phenomenon. All these years the meanness in her nature must have been hoarded under her placid exterior; it had festered till now it burst forth in a venomous spurt.

His mind was more on the revelation of herself than upon what she was saying till his attention was suddenly compelled. "It wasn't enough that she was jealous of me as a teacher," she hissed, "but she must fall in love with you."

"In love with me?" repeated Mr. Har-

wood incredulously. He had felt so humble under her exposures of his dawdling, shiftless character, that he had not felt sure he had even her respect.

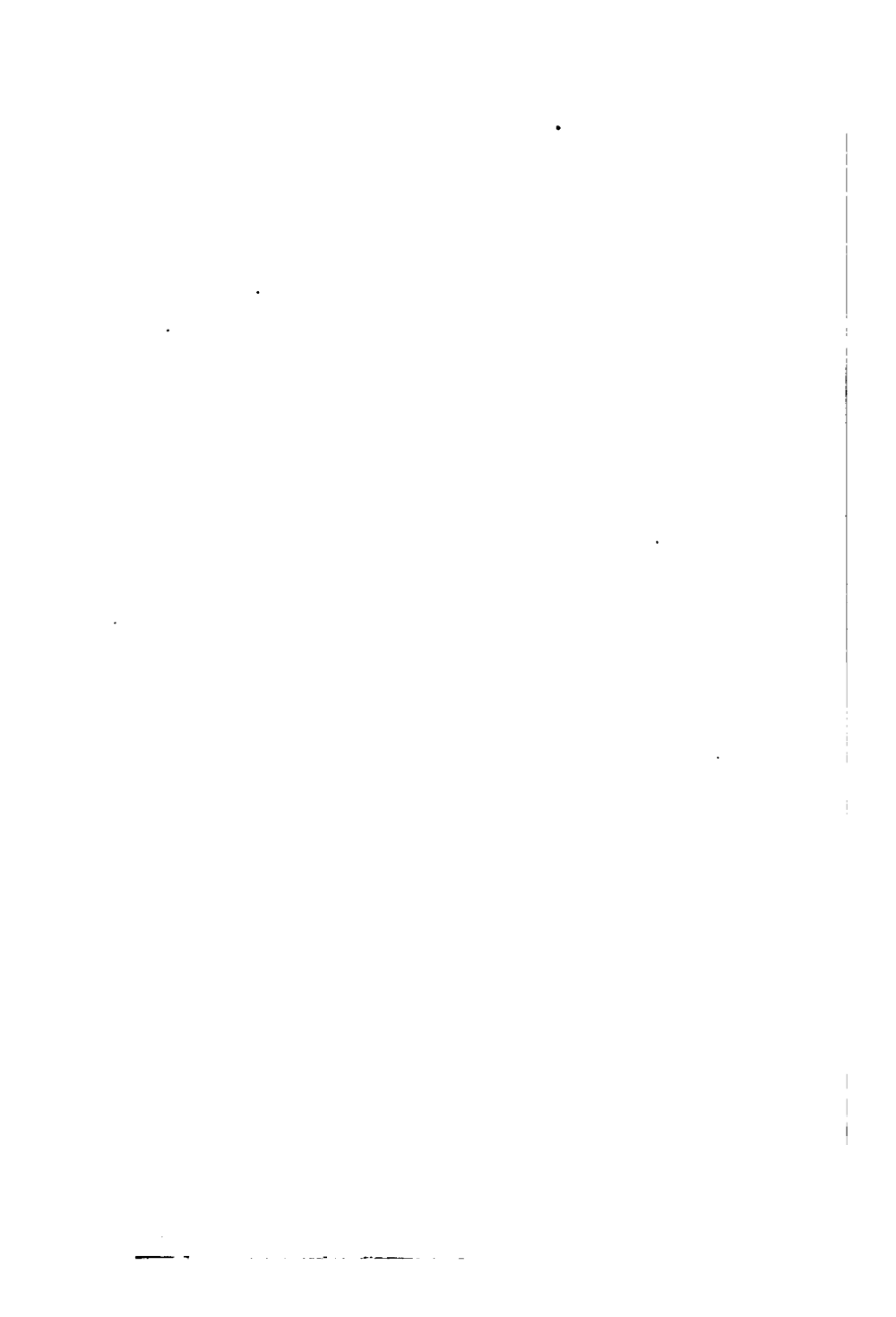
"Yes, in love with you, fawning upon you, ready to lick the dust at your feet. Every other teacher in school knew it but you, and despised her and ridiculed her—"

"That will do, Miss Fleming," said Mr. Harwood rising. "Not another word. It may interest you to know that except for your own confession I should never have known you stole the lines. From what you say I see that Miss Floyd knew it, but she would never have told. When I referred to them just now she replied only that the verses were beautiful and charmingly read. As you confess they were not original I must ask you to carry away the copy you attached to the por-

trait. If it should occur to you that you might better resign it will save my asking the board for your dismissal. I hope it will not be necessary for me to see you again." And he held the door open for her to go.

IX

Then he went down to Ruby's room. He found her puzzling over her broken lock there and convinced himself that Miss Fleming's insight into her feeling toward him was correct. He also convinced her that it was the greatest joy that had ever come into his life.



THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

I

It was State association week and Glen Dwight was taking his midday meal at Keeler's. Not from choice. He had got his breakfast at the Waldorf lunch, going up to the counter to pay for his baked apple and oatmeal and eggs and coffee as he took them, and walking out with less spent than it cost a man at the Ten Eyck to tip the waiter and the check girl. He would have gone there now, but he had been appointed upon a committee, and the chairman had asked Glen to meet him here and talk things over.

The chairman was a bustling fellow. He had talked things over, which consisted

in telling Glen what he had determined on, had eaten a meal of four courses, and had got away again before Glen was half through his roast beef. The fact is, when you pay forty cents for a single dish and should in all decency give the waiter ten cents more, you must make it last pretty well. Fortunately the bread was good, and with what Glen had annexed from the chairman's plate it was abundant. So he was eating in a leisurely way, not quite Fletcherizing but getting more out of a single helping of sirloin of beef than is customary. The bread would do very well for dessert.

II

While he was still within the borders of his meal Addington Mudge came up, principal of a school in the adjoining county.

"Glad you aren't through," he said:

"I hate to eat alone."

Then as the waiter helped him off with his coat he asked familiarly, "Anything specially good today?"

"Why, the chef told me the Long Island duckling was particularly fine," the waiter replied, rubbing his hands.

"That will do capitally. Give me fried sweet potatoes and cauliflower with it. Bring half a dozen blue points first, and clear turtle soup; you have some that's pretty good here."

"Yes, sir; yes, sir," replied the waiter.
"We pride ourselves on that."

"All right, bring me some. And, let's see, no fruit salad?"

"None on the bill, sir, but we can make you up a very nice fruit salad, sir."

"All right, do that. Grape fruit for base, maraschino cherries, and anything

else you want to put in. Then pudding, brie cheese, and a small coffee. That will be all. O bring me two clover club cocktails. You'll have one, won't you, Dwight, although you are started? No? Well, one then. And, say, put the whole egg in, yolk and all."

"How can he do it?" thought Glen. "His salary is the same as mine, he has as many children as I have, and what he pays for this lunch would keep us in food for a week."

"How is the high cost of living affecting you over in Woolseytown?" asked Addington as he seated himself.

"We don't think much about it," replied Glen. "We live simply, we keep no servant, my wife does the marketing, the children help around the house, and we save as much as we ever did."

"Saving, on sixteen hundred a year?"

"Yes, I have saved five hundred dollars every year since I left college."

"Incredible. How do you do it?"

"By dispensing with what we can't afford. I had to save the first year: I was five hundred dollars in debt and I was bound to pay it off. My salary was eight hundred, I got board for four dollars a week, and I worked vacations and tutored some in term time. I saved the five hundred so easily that I resolved never to be satisfied with less, and the amount I have put away has always been at least as much."

"What have you done with it?"

"Kept it in the savings bank."

"What interest?"

"Four per cent."

"Pretty slow accumulation."

"But sure. I have fifteen thousand salted away now, and every quarter a hundred and fifty dollars of interest is credited up to the account: almost as much as I earned the first year."

"You are certainly wise to keep clear of schemes. How many of the fellows have lost their savings by going into stocks and corn and races and mines and railroads and mortgages they can't collect on."

"Yes, indeed. When they come to me with these projects I tell them I know enough about business to know that I don't know anything about it and that there is a good deal to be learned. So I trust my money to the savings banks, that are run for us ignorant people by experts."

"You are certainly long-headed. I used to speculate some, and I lost, as all green-horns are bound to eventually. It was only

by bone-head luck that I struck my bonanza."

"What was that?"

"I am not talking about it much, but I was let in on the ground floor of the Oomet mine."

"Where is that?"

"You never heard of it: it is not even listed on the stock exchange. The men who developed it have kept control, and it pays so heavily nobody sells."

"How much does it pay?"

"Five per cent a month."

"A month!"

"I don't wonder you are startled. That is sixty percent a year. But it pays it. How do you suppose I could live with my family on sixteen hundred?"

Glen had often wondered. He looked at Addington now. His clothes seemed

to have come fresh from his tailor's, and a Fifth avenue tailor's at that. His shirt was of silk; the overcoat the waiter had hung up had a heavy satin lining. He must have been an hour in a barber's hands that morning. In everything about him there was an air of sleek prosperity. No, it couldn't be done on sixteen hundred a year or twice that.

"How much of the stock have you?" he asked.

"That is my calamity; only four thousand dollars, and I might just as well have had forty."

"How did you come to get it?"

"A classmate of mine had been travelling through Montana and he happened to be in this place just about the time the man who struck the lead filed his claim. The man needed ready money and sold my

classmate a quarter of the claim for a thousand dollars. My classmate sold me a tenth of his quarter for a thousand dollars and when the mine was capitalized this brought me four thousand shares at a dollar a share. Every month I get five per cent, two hundred dollars. That's what I live on: not my salary."

"I should think that would be good stock to pick up."

"So would a diamond necklace. But it isn't lying around loose. Nobody ever sells it. Now and then some holder dies and to divide an estate the stock has to be disposed of. But people are on the watch, and before an outsider can get to it someone has snatched it up."

The two men finished their lunch together. Glen paid forty cents, adding reluctantly an extra dime; Addington gave

the waiter what was left of three dollars.

III

Glen's first series of reflections looked down on Addington. He was making a god of his belly; he would have a gouty and dyspeptic old age; he was purse-proud and ostentatious; he got money too easily, was spending it too freely, and would come to want; he would be tempted to speculate: Glen had heard that he often sat in front of the ticker.

Yes, these lucky investments looked alluring, but it was honest saving that counted in the end. He was much better off than Addington.

IV

Glen Dwight and his wife had been classmates at a coeducational college. They had both boarded themselves, both gone hungry, both done outside work for

support. Both had risen early, studied late, worked hard. But they were both of good stock, of strong constitution, clean in thought and life, fond of games, and gifted with sound common sense, so they came through fine specimens of manhood and womanhood. They married because they loved each other and because they wanted to be parents. When it became likely their desire was to be satisfied they spared no pains to make the environment of the coming stranger all that could be provided. The mother had every physical care, and was kept in an atmosphere of mental and spiritual exaltation. When a healthy boy appeared the joy of the parents was unmeasured. As he grew up a delight, and was followed three years later by a sister, and after four years more by another brother, the parents became

every day more and more absorbed in the future of their children.

Of course financial provision came first. As Glen had told Addington, they had saved fifteen thousand dollars. This they regarded as a college fund for the three children. They planned to send the elder boy to Yale, the younger to Harvard, and the girl to Smith. The children were not to scrape through as the parents had been obliged to. Each was to have enough to live comfortably, to do what the other students did, to share social as well as educational advantages. The parents reckoned that an average of a thousand dollars a year would provide all this, cutting boldly into the accumulated fund, but leaving margin enough to get the children started as wage-earners, able to provide for themselves.

V

Merrick the elder boy was already in Yale. He had justified his parents' care and he was showing the right spirit there. He had furnished his room frugally, he economized quite as much as his parents desired, they had reason to know he was making a favorable impression and getting in with the right crowd.

Just at this time, however, they had received a letter that troubled them.

"Dear parents," he had written, "I am going to put something before you with a good deal of reluctance. I have hesitated over even mentioning it, but I am so sure you know I trust entirely to your judgment and shall be wholly contented with what you decide that it seems best to state the case.

"It has happened that the fellow I find

myself closest to here is Gerald Macleod. Someway we seem to have the same purposes, the same ideas, the same ways of looking at things, so that when we feel like a long walk we each think first of the other. Now he is one of the wealthy fellows, rich way back to his great-grandfather, and he boards with some other well-to-do men he met at Hotchkiss. They have asked me to join them. Gerald has had me up there two or three times, and it really is a treat. At Commons the food is good enough: one couldn't ask a better place to feed; but up at the Pi Etas, as they call themselves without much originality, there is not only food but the feast of reason and the flow of soul. It has seemed to me with these fine fellows that I was getting as much at a meal there as in any recitation.

"But—the board is ten dollars a week. It seems preposterous even to contemplate it, and I shall drop it without a murmur unless it is your judgment that I shall get enough more of what I come to college for to make up the difference."

Of course the parents felt they must reply that such extravagance was impossible. But how hard it was to deny Merrick what would be of such advantage to him. If their savings were bringing them five per cent a month instead of four per cent a year, how easy it would be for Glen to give Merrick everything he wanted. "Why should that opportunity have fallen to Addington Mudge instead of to me?" Glen reflected, discontentedly. "He puts it into clover-club cocktails; I should devote it to my children."

VI

The next day a stranger came to the schoolhouse to sell maps. They were a new kind, expensive, not very attractive, not approved, and Glen did not waste much time on them. As the agent was going away he asked, "By the way, you don't want to buy a scientific library, do you?"

"No," replied Glen; "we have expended our appropriation for this year."

"I thought you might perhaps want the books for your own use. The collection contains about everything published on mining. It was got together by a second or third cousin of mine who died without any nearer relatives and made me his executor. There are so many of us distant kin that no one of us will realize much of

anything, and I want to get everything out of my hands."

"Was he successful in his mining?"

"O yes. I haven't made out an inventory yet, but he left forty thousand dollars in the Union trust company, New York, and shares in a hundred mines."

"Paying mines?"

"I haven't had a chance to look them up yet. Probably some paying heavily and some not worth the paper they are printed on, like all mining stock."

"Have you any shares in the Oomet?"

"Oomet? How do you spell it?"

"Double-o-m-e-t, I suppose: it isn't very well known."

"I don't seem to remember that. I have a list at the hotel: I'll look. Wait." The agent fumbled in his pocket and pulled out a handful of documents. "Here

it is. No, that's the real estate; and that's the railroad bonds. No, I guess I haven't it here. Yes, here it is after all. Oomet, you say? Double o? Yes, here is some, fifteen thousand shares. Sounds like a lot, but it is only a dollar a share and very likely not worth a cent."

Glen was overwhelmed by a sudden temptation as irresistible as it was incredible. Here were just the shares he had hoped in vain to find, providentially thrown in his way by a man who had no conception of their value, and the ownership in which was so divided that to lose them would mean little to any one, while to get them would mean so much to him. He tried to conceal his eagerness and to seem indifferent as he asked, "Want to sell those Oomet shares? I know a man who

has a few and thinks they are going to turn out well."

"I should have to look up the market values before selling any of them," replied the agent. "I really know nothing about mining stocks. I don't want to stick you with them if they are worthless or to sacrifice them if they have value."

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Glen, trying to repress his eagerness. "Those shares aren't listed, as I happen to know, but I'll take a chance on them and give you a thousand dollars in clean cash for the lot."

"I want to get rid of the blamed stuff," said the agent, "but I shouldn't feel justified in selling any stock here below par before I had looked it up."

"I've taken a fancy to that stock," replied Glen, determined to close a bargain

before the agent could discover how priceless Oomet was, "and I'll give you par for the lot."

"Fifteen thousand dollars?" asked the man incredulously.

"Yes, fifteen thousand dollars. I have it, as you will see by these savings banks books."

"I am willing to sell the stock at par," said the agent, "but why take so much of it? Take one thousand, five thousand. These mining stocks are mighty uncertain. You don't want to put all your eggs into one basket."

"Yes," replied Glen eagerly, "I have the money to spare and I want it all."

The agent protested, but Glen insisted and before night the stock was in his hands, with stipulation that any unpaid dividends went with it. How glad he was that he

had not answered Merrick's letter. "Dear Merrick," he wrote, "don't hesitate a moment. Join the Pi Etas and hold your own with the best of them. I have been fortunate in some recent investments and we shan't have to pare our potatoes quite so close in future."

But he did not tell his wife about the transaction. For the first time in their married life he concealed something. He knew that he had yielded to his cupidity and swindled the heirs of the agent's second cousin. He spent a restless night, and awoke heavy-eyed.

VII

One thing eased his conscience a little. He had not dared to make inquiry about dividends for fear of awakening the agent's suspicions of the value of the stock, but he had been able to infer that certainly

the last month's, probably those of the month before, and possibly those of three months had not been paid. In other words he had a certain \$750 in hand, and perhaps \$1500 or \$2250, in immediate return for his fifteen thousand dollars. He sent registry of the purchase to the New York office with rather pompous directions as to forwarding accrued dividends, and awaited the first draft with much anxiety as to what the amount would be.

Seven hundred and fifty dollars a month. Yes, the children could have everything now. Merrick should spend as much as the other Pi Eta boys, and Myra and Monmouth should have the best of everything. For that matter, he himself wasn't going to scrape down to the quick any more. He was going to have just as new clothes as Addington Mudge, from just as good a

tailor, with an overcoat of just as thick satin lining. He didn't care about clover-club cocktails and clear turtle soup, but next time he would have fried sweet potatoes with his roast beef.

In fact, why teach school any longer? It seemed so pitiful to work eight or ten hours every day for eight dollars a day when twenty-five dollars a day was pouring into his pocket for nothing. Twenty-five dollars a day. Stock that paid sixty per cent a year was worth a thousand per cent. That fifteen thousand dollars of stock, all his and paid for, was worth a hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Glen was at this moment the richest men in Woolseyville.

No, he doubted if he would teach after this year. He enjoyed it, but after all it was a dog's life. Up at six o'clock in the morning the year around, light or dark,

warm or cold; at school by eight-thirty; hurried lunch and back again, staying often till late to supper. And then subject to a cheese-paring board. He wanted to get out a forty-page catalogue this year like Braintree, but the board had voted to issue only the usual four pages. He would resign and show them whether they knew better than he how to run the school. No, it was much work and little pay. He would resign and go to Europe. Time he went there. In fact, why not take his wife and the younger children to Leipzig and finish their fitting for college over there?

For one thing, he was agreeably surprised that he had such financial acumen. He had really managed it very well to get hold of that stock without making the agent suspicious. Of course he had bought

it for less than it was worth, but that was only capitalizing the knowledge he happened to have of Oomet stock. All business was based on that. He had heard a book-seller boast of buying the 7th volume of the *American Educational Monthly* for three cents and selling it to the Bureau of education for seven dollars. That was legitimate. It was the bookseller's principal stock in trade to recognize rare books and to know who wanted them. The three cents the bookseller paid was all the volume was worth to the junk-dealer he bought it of; the seven dollars he got was no more than the volume was worth to the Bureau of education. The bookseller had made a profit, but in the transaction he had done a favor to both the junk-dealer and the Bureau of education. So here, Glen had paid the agent fifteen thousand dollars for

mining stock supposed to be valueless. The agent might have sacrificed it for a song before he found out what it was worth. No, the transaction was legitimate, absolutely legitimate.

But though he said it over to himself a good many times, Glen didn't think so and his conscience would keep prodding him. He would have to turn it over in his mind a good many times before he could phrase it to tell his wife about it.

VIII

The next day he found himself in a new relation to his environment. On his way to school he met the cashier of the bank, treasurer of the school-board. He had always deferred to him as a man of property. But he was worth only some fifty thousand dollars, bringing in five or six per cent: Glen could buy out three like

him. And as he nodded at him Glen looked at him with a condescension so marked that the cashier turned around and looked back at him, wondering what had come over him.

At school everything seemed petty. He had always delighted in his work and been proud of it, but now it seemed like playing checkers with little Monmouth. Sixteen hundred dollars a year, just about two months income: it wasn't worthy of him. In fact now that he had proved himself capable of finance he was quite likely to look into other opportunities. Let little men teach school: it was no field for a man of real ability.

IX

He rather expected to hear from his dividends the following day, but the registration took time and he was not surprised

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noon he telephoned that an expert happened to be in town, and asked Glen to call after school.

X

"Been buying stock in this mine?" the expert asked him.

"Yes," replied Glen, not too willingly; but little by little he was led to tell the whole story.

"There are two fools born every minute, twenty," the expert said contemptuously, "and schoolmasters are the easiest mark alive. Your wife wouldn't buy a tin dish-pan from a peddler, would she? She would go to a store where she knew the proprietor and could get redress if it leaked. Anybody would suppose that if you were going to invest the savings of a lifetime you would come to the cashier here and do the business through him."

that the letter did not come. Even one more day he passed patiently and still another without great anxiety. But the next day his own letter came back to him with a rubber-stamped hand pointing to his printed return address and another stamp, "No such person at the address named". He must have mistaken the number and he looked at the certificate of stock. No, he had it right, 118 Wall street. The Oomet company must have moved, but in that case the postman would know the new address and deliver the letter there. Something was wrong, and on his way back to school from intermission he stopped in at the bank and asked the cashier what he knew of the Oomet mining company. The cashier had never heard of it but promised to write to a firm dealing in mining securities. Later in the after-

noon he telephoned that an expert happened to be in town, and asked Glen to call after school.

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"Isn't the stock good?" asked 'Glen, shaking in his shoes.

"It never paid a dividend in its history. It never took out a ton of ore. It was capitalized on specimens that were either salted or in shallow pockets. It was closed years ago, and there are judgments out against holders of the stock. If you do not get rid of those fifteen thousand shares you may be assessed on them."

"But Addington Mudge told me he had four thousand shares and that they paid him two hundred dollars a month."

"So they do, some months. They will pay him five thousand dollars this month, if not seven and a half. Don't you see that he told you that cock-and-bull story so that this agent could come around and sell you his worthless stock? They divide on what the man got out of you."

"Then why can't I get part of it back out of him?"

"How? He didn't sell you the stock. You can't prove his connection with the man who sold you, whose name you did not even take the pains to find out. If you got hold of this man you would have no redress. He did not urge the stock on you. He advised you not to buy it, or if you bought any not to buy so much, and told you it was probably worthless. You chose to buy unsight, unseen, thinking you were getting the best of him. It is an old trick. This Mudge has worked it several times. That's the sort of five per cent dividends he gets from stock. The tenth commandment wants an inserted specification these times, 'nor his big rate per cent nor anything that is thy neighbor's'."

XI

Now Glen had to tell his wife. He did not fear reproaches. Absorbed as they were in their children, their love for each other had always predominated, and he knew her first thought would be consideration for him. But he was astonished when she threw her arms around his neck with tears of joy. "Thank God," she cried, "we have lost only the money. I was afraid I had lost you. These last five days you have been so different that I was wondering if after all these years I must learn you over again. Now I see what it was, and your old self comes back to me. You are still my one hero."

What happens to men to whom home is not a refuge? He framed her face in his hands as he looked fondly into her eyes.

"The marvel is," he murmured, "that you really believe it."

THE HOLD-UP

THE HOLD-UP

I

Mr. Coe's berth was No. 1, at the head as the train was going. On a late European trip he had formed the habit of riding backward, so he sat where he faced the other occupants. Toward four o'clock a young woman was ushered into No. 4 who seemed to him at first glance

The not impossible she

That shall command my heart and me.

Apparently she was everything he wanted in a wife. She was petite, to contrast with his clumsiness. She had an air of distinction, to make up for his commonplaceness. She had dark eyes and hair to contrast with his tow head. She showed

a touch of the peremptory, of one accustomed to command, which he admired the more because he was self-deprecatory. Her attire was simple, but had the nattiness that requires a graceful carriage as well as a skilled dress-maker. All her belongings were unadorned but elegant. When she unfastened her shawl-strap he recognized the magazine-cover of the *Revue des deux Mondes*, and the novel as one that had appeared in the Paris shop-windows a fortnight before marked *Vient de paraître*. Yet she was unmistakably American.

Her quantity of luggage indicated a long trip and he judged she was going through to the coast. He hoped accident might make them acquainted. Of course some men would find an excuse to speak the first afternoon but he had no such assurance.

Not so with the young fellow in No. 2, whom Mr. Coe had hardly observed, but who at once betrayed consciousness of his fair neighbor's proximity, after a question or two was comparing notes with her, and in an hour had seated himself beside her.

Well, he was the kind who could do it. He looked like a college graduate who had been an athlete, with the square chin familiar in advertisements of Harrowing collars and Rippinhemmer clothes. A drummer, Mr. Coe thought, probably uninteresting to men, but the sort of self-sufficient fellow who gets on with women.

Fragments of conversation that wafted across the aisle proved to Mr. Coe that he was unjust. The young people found that they had common acquaintances, evidently in circles the society columns find interesting. They talked familiarly of Seville

and Biskra and Cairo. The fellow must have been born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Mr. Coe was born without any spoon at all, and so far found it difficult to supply one of pewter. He saw that he was to have no chance with the young woman, and he looked at her as a child looks at the unattainable moon.

II

The train was a long one, and he thought it wise to go in to dinner at the first call. Even then the only unoccupied table had places for four, and when the couple from his car came in they were obliged to seat themselves fronting him. They were well bred enough to recognize him as a neighbor and to draw him into conversation. To his surprise the girl showed interest in his simple and frank replies, listening to him with more recognition than to her

more suitable companion. Presently the talk turned to train robberies. The week before two masked men had held up a train on the Santa Fé, gone through the coaches, and compelled every passenger to give up his valuables.

"I don't see how that is possible," the young man remarked, with disgust. "There were fifty men on the train, yet they let these two rob the whole crowd and get away with it."

"What would you have done?" asked Mr. Coe.

"Why, I am no dime novel hero," replied the young fellow modestly, "but I would have given one of those fellows a clinch."

"And been shot through the heart?"

"Shot at, no doubt, but not necessarily hit. Haven't you noticed that in ac-

counts of this sort of thing when there is firing it is seldom anybody is killed? The bullets go wild."

"Not at close range. In the stories I have read the passenger who attempts to resist goes home in the baggage car."

"What would you do if two bandits should suddenly appear in this car, point revolvers at you, and tell you to hold up your hands?" asked the lady.

"Hold my hands up, without an instant's hesitation," replied Mr. Coe.

She was manifestly disappointed in him, but her companion was more generous. "You think you would," he interposed, "but when the crisis really came you would rise to meet it, and resist."

"It is hardly crisis enough to rise to. They would get my watch and a hundred dollars. These I don't want to lose, but

I can replace them. If they put a number 45 bullet through my diaphragm I can't get another."

"He that saveth his life shall lose it," quoted the young fellow sententiously.

"All that a man hath will he give for his life," retorted Mr. Coe. "If he doesn't save his life he will certainly lose it."

The couple looked at each other, and Mr. Coe recognized the mutual judgment that he was hopeless, not in their class. They turned the subject and still included him in the conversation, but he realized that it was only because they were courteous people, not because they had further interest in him. He was the last man in the world to accept condescension, his replies were curt, and he was quite determined after leaving the table to manifest no

further recognition that an acquaintance had begun.

III

He would have withdrawn before they did, but the car was so full that service was slow and all three paid their checks together. Mr. Coe stood back for them to precede him, but they waved him on.

They passed through the first two coaches without incident, and had reached the end of the nearly deserted third, when the front door opened with sudden quickness and two masked men entered with heavy revolvers cocked and pointed. "Hands up!" they cried.

Mr. Coe who was nearest, looked the first one in the eyes and lifted his arms deliberately. "That's curious," he remarked. "We were talking about hold-

ups in the dining-car and wondering what we would do."

"What you'll do is to keep damn quiet while we go through you," the first robber said, and proceeded to snatch Mr. Coe's watch from his waistcoat pocket, his pocket-book from his right-hand trouser pocket, and a roll of bills from his left-hand pocket.

"Like taking milk from babes," remarked Mr. Coe.

"See here," said the robber, "you are too damn satisfied about this. You've got a big pile hid somewhere. Fork it out."

"You've got all I know anything about," he replied good-naturedly. "If you find anything more I'll go you halves on it."

The robber made a careful search, feeling in everyone of Mr. Coe's nineteen pockets, reaching inside his shirt, and passing a

hand down his legs, finally concluding that the big bills were hidden in his shoes.

To feel below Mr. Coe's knees the robber had bent over, and to use both hands had placed the revolver on the floor. Under his coat something stood out which looked to Mr. Coe like a second revolver stuck in his belt. "If I could pull that revolver out with a sudden enough motion I could plant a bullet in his head before he could get in a shot," he thought to himself.

There were some chances. It might not be a revolver, it might not be loaded, it might be a kind of fire Mr. Coe could not get the hang of in time. The first motion he made would warn the robber, while it might be quite a chore to pull out the revolver, the belt being tightened as the robber bent over.

Then there was the second robber to

cope with. Mr. Coe glanced at this second, who had soon disposed of the young man and now was searching the young woman; at this instant he was opening the bosom of her gown to find what she concealed there.

All this takes time to tell, but in Mr. Coe's mind it was instantaneous. When he saw the girl's face flush at the indignity he decided to take the chance. Like lightning his hand came down, twisted out the revolver, and before the robber could rise or aim sent a big bullet through his brain. The second robber heard the shot and turned and fired, but both his hands had been occupied in searching, he did not have a firm grip on his pistol, and the first ball went through the roof. Before he could fire a second Mr. Coe had put a ball through his heart.

Both robbers lay motionless on the floor. Mr. Coe stooped over, took the remaining revolver from the first robber, satisfied himself that both were dead, and took both revolvers from the second robber. He handed one of the pistols to the young man, who had looked on wondering and trembling. "These two won't trouble us any more," he said, "but they may have confederates. Take this gun and we three will go forward."

The young man attempted to take the pistol but his hand shook. "Give it to me," said the girl, and Mr. Coe handed it over to her.

What a magnificent creature she was, angry at the recent insult but not in the least scared. They went on to the next car, their own. "Please don't come with me any farther," Mr. Coe said. "I don't

think there are any more of the gang. At the most there will be only one and I can handle him better alone. Stay here and keep the revolver to defend yourself if the unexpected should happen."

IV

Mr. Coe went on through the next car, which was the day-coach and had not been disturbed, but in the smoking-car he found a man struggling with the conductor and brakeman in a quarrel over a ticket. He looked up quickly as Mr. Coe entered, but the revolvers were hidden and Mr. Coe showed no evidence of excitement, so the fellow judged he was a day-coach passenger come in to smoke a cigar, and went on with his dispute. The conductor was about to pull the emergency cord and stop the train when Mr. Coe warned him. "Don't do that," he said. "It is just what

this scoundrel wants. His two confederates have been robbing the sleeping-cars."

"Where are they?" asked the conductor.

"Both dead," replied Mr. Coe, who then brought out his two revolvers and called to the third robber, "Hands up!"

"Not on your life," the fellow cried, drawing his own gun, but before he could level it Mr. Coe had shot him through the eye, and he fell dead.

"I beg your pardon," Mr. Coe said apologetically. "I am new to this business. If I had more experience and more skill I would have shot him through the arm and tried to capture him alive, but I couldn't take any chances."

"You did just the right thing," replied the conductor, shaking his hand. "Was it you who killed the other two?"

"Why, yes, in a way. That is to say,

one of them bent over with a second gun in his belt so as practically to hand me his revolver to shoot him with, and of course I did it: anybody would under the circumstances."

"In what car was it?"

"Third back: second of the sleepers."

"Let's look after them. This fellow will never make any more trouble. I recognize him now from his pictures. There is a big reward on his head."

They all went back to the car where the bodies lay, and then returned to Mr. Coe's seat. He took out a map and began studying it. "Conductor," he said, "all three of those men were killed in Sangamon county. Our last station in that county is Morganville. There will have to be an inquest, I suppose, and in this county. Can't you telegraph ahead

and have the coroner ready, so that we may all give our evidence without delaying the train?"

"Capital idea," said the conductor. "I will see to it. You plan as if you shot train robbers every day." And the delay at Morganville was brief.

V

Mr. Coe found himself lionized to a degree that was distasteful, and he directed the porter to make up his berth and be sure he was not disturbed. The next morning he was the first one at breakfast, but even then his table was soon surrounded by people who wanted to gossip about the details. He went back to his seat disgusted, and when the conductor came through he asked for a stop-over at the next station.

"I thought you were in a hurry to get through," said the conductor.

"I was, but it is more important to get where I can be let alone."

"I will fix it for you," said the conductor, who had observed sympathetically how Mr. Coe was annoyed in the dining-car. "There is a vacant drawing-room in car 5. I will give you that. You can lock the door and have your meals there."

As the conductor went back to make the necessary preparations, the young woman in No. 4 came up. Mr. Coe rose, resigned to more common-place congratulations, but she motioned him to a seat and sat down beside him.

"First, let me introduce myself," she said. "I am Katrine Belden."

How sociable of her to give her first name, instead of saying "Miss Belden".

"I am really from Boston, though living in the suburbs. I know that you are Mr. Coe. Where do you live?"

"I don't live anywhere. I am a teacher, and I stay where I happen to be as long as they will let me. Just now I am at Auburndale."

"Which means that you will stay there till some place offers you a thousand dollars more. You see I am learning to interpret and discount your braggadocio."

How bright and keen she was. And how friendly. Really she was showing interest in him.

"I had to beg for my present place," he said, "and got it only because there was a sudden vacancy by death. They didn't expect to keep me a second year but they finally did. Out of the frying-pan, you know."

She laughed. "Try that on strangers," she said. "I feel that I have begun to know you." Then she held out her little gloved hand. "I don't want to utter any banal congratulations," she said, "but what you did last night makes me take deeper breath, as when I approach a big mountain."

"I wish you wouldn't say that," Mr. Coe replied in genuine embarrassment, but clinging to the little gloved hand. "It was the merest luck. He just happened to bend over so as to hand me his gun. Anybody who had my chance would have taken it."

"Our friend in No. 2, for instance, who couldn't hold a revolver after it was all over?"

"Very likely, if it had come to him the same way. It is easier to do a thing than

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to see it done. I should probably have trembled myself if somebody else had shot the men."

"You really mean that, don't you? I never hoped to meet a man like you."

Mr. Coe laughed. "I ought to have insisted on getting off at the next station. When I was a boy and was sent to a new school I came across some of my fellows-to-be throwing snowballs at a pigeon-hole in a barn. I rounded a snowball and threw it. Into the hole it went, hardly scraping."

"What a shot you must have been!"

"It looked so, and my fellows thought so. I am afraid I thought so. Unfortunately I threw a dozen more snowballs and hardly hit the barn. My reputation was gone. My snowball happened to go into the pigeonhole last night, and we

ought to part while that is all you know about me. All the rest of my life I shall be as commonplace as I had been all of my life before."

VI

"Tell me something about this all of your life before."

"Orphan. Barely inheritance enough to scrape through college. Teacher. That is all there is to it. I wouldn't dare ask you to tell me about your all of the life before."

"Why not?"

"Because you are a swell."

"Am I? Let me epitomize: Orphan. Barely inheritance enough to scrape through college. Teacher."

"Are you really a teacher?"

"I sometimes doubt it, but those who have hired me have kept me."

"I supposed you were a millionaire. How could a teacher buy such a purse as that?"

"It is a good purse. My father paid sixty francs for it in Paris. But that was fifteen years ago. I have taken care of it and it is as strong today as then. I never expect to carry any other. So the yearly cost is not great."

"And you buy everything else the same way?"

"In general, yes. That was one of my father's principles: buy only what you can get the best of, and take care of it."

"How long have you been an orphan?"

"My mother died at my birth; my father when I was half through college. He had carried out his principle of the best in my education. I lived my first six years in Paris, where I was born, and I heard

no English except from my father, who in turn never spoke French before me, that my accent might be untarnished. Then I was brought over here and put in the best private schools till after a year of travel in Europe and northern Africa I went to Smith. There I had everything until my father's sudden death. His business had been profitable but it was individual, depending on his personality, with no transferrable value, and his life-insurance barely paid our debts. So for the two last years I practically supported myself."

"How?"

"Lots of ways. We are democratic at Smith and lose no caste for needing money and earning it. I put a placard on my door offering to darn stockings, mend linen, clean up rooms, and earned a lot that way. Then I got to tutoring in

French, and presently earned all I needed."

"Then the society people I overheard you talking with No. 2 about were Smith friends?"

"Largely, though my father had a wide acquaintance, and we formed some friendships while travelling."

"Where are you teaching now?"

"French in Kansas City. I am on my way to Oakland to interview the committee there, for a higher salary. I couldn't save much last year."

VII

At this moment the porter appeared. "Yo' stateroom in No. 5 is all ready, sah," he said. "I'll take yo' tings."

"I have changed my mind about the stateroom: I think I'll stay right here," Mr. Coe said, handing the porter half a dollar.

The porter grinned. "Yassah, I understand, sah," he said, and went back.

VIII

"I wish you wouldn't make that application in Oakland."

"Why?"

"We have a place in Auburndale that I hope will fit you better."

"French?"

"Not entirely. It is rather general—more a matter of personality than of teaching, to put before our girls a model of mind and character and manners."

"A model? O Mr. Coe. You make me think of the wax figures in a department store window."

"You don't make me think of them. You would be doing the school a greater service than I can."

"But the idea is so unusual. What is the position called?"

"Wife of the principal."

"Mr. Coe! And you have posed as a bashful man."

"I am a bashful man, Katrine. I ought to be for I have little to my credit. There are people in San Francisco who can tell you that what little I have had to say for myself is true. My salary is two thousand dollars, and I have more than that amount in the savings-bank, so that you may be assured of modest support. But O Katrine," and he took her unresisting hand, "I feel as though what I have dabbled in so far was only experimental, while I was finding the other half of myself, and that with you for my help and my inspiration I might really do something. You are what I have longed for but had not dared to

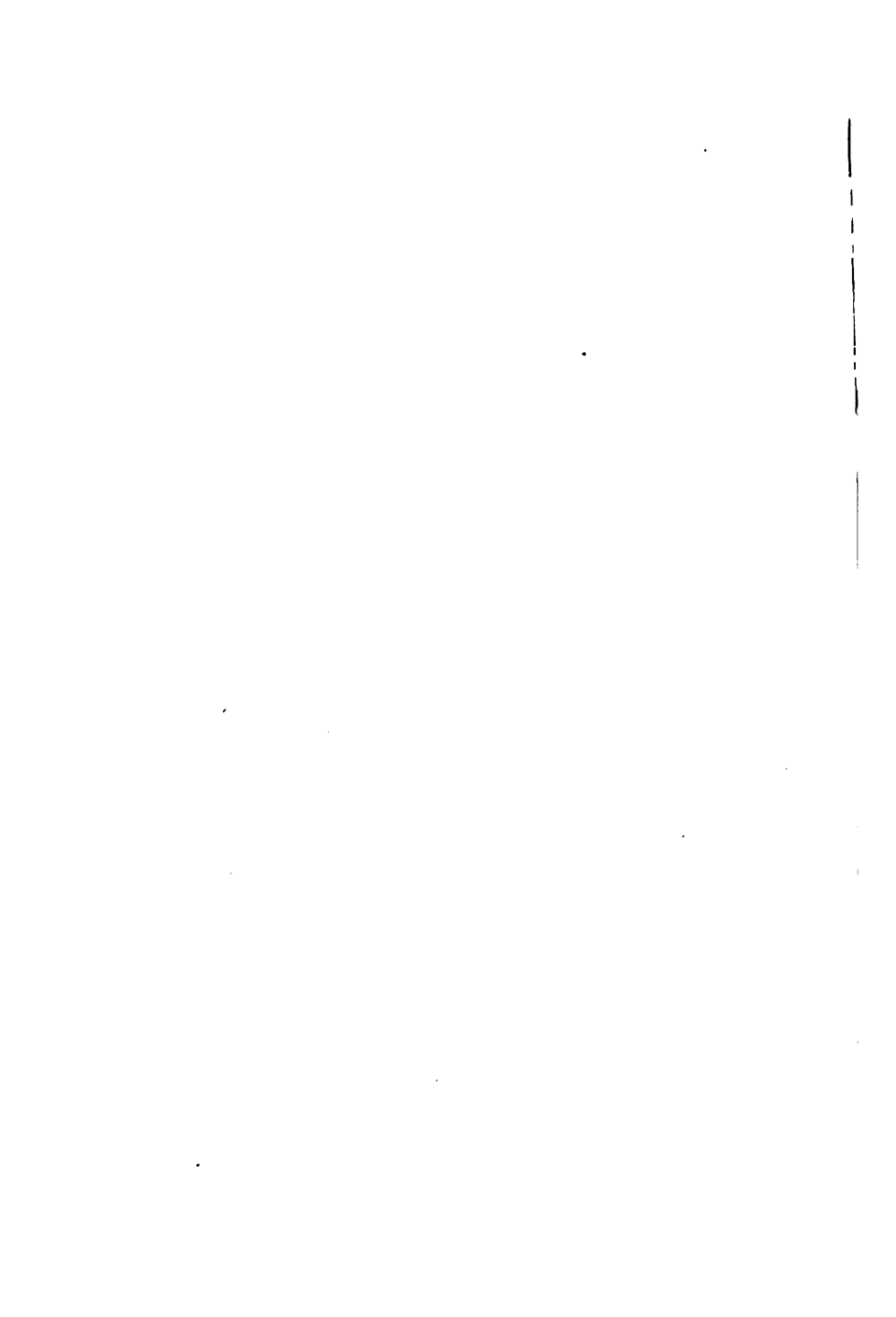
hope for. If this accident gives you to me, I shall feel that in the future all of life is mine. Will you be my wife and now?",

IX

She did not take away her hand. "Mr. Coe," she said, "we have lived a good many years without each other; we can live another week. I am to stay in Berkeley with my old roommate, Tessie Rush: here is her address. You may call as often as you like. If at the end of a week you wish to renew this question I will give you an answer."

"And the Oakland place?"

"I shall not apply for it."



A MERRY SOUL



A MERRY SOUL

I

"Seems like a joke, doesn't it?" Mr. Hilary asked, laughing.

It certainly did. He was not only a hunchback but he was twisted, as if he had been tied partly into a knot. And yet he had applied for the principalship of this school of a dozen teachers. It was preposterous, but somehow there was such a merry smile on his face that it was contagious, and every member of the board smiled not at him but with him.

Besides, he was scrupulously neat. The straight parting of his hair showed a clean scalp underneath, his teeth though not regular were aggressively white, he was

freshly shaved, his linen was spotless, his clothes, of good cloth and made by a good tailor, gave even to his misshapen figure an air of distinction.

"What experience have you had?" asked the president, not that it made any difference but to seem to give him consideration.

"Not a great deal. They hesitated to give me a little district school with six pupils, but the trustee raised my wages the next year and then a bigger school took me. Last year I had two assistants in a small village school. Joke as it seems, I really think I could manage your school."

"How did you get your education?"

"Worked for it. I didn't inherit anything, even a name. I was put into an orphan asylum. They didn't know who my father was, and though they knew who

my mother was they never told me. But I was, like Alexander Pope and the interrogation mark, a little crooked thing that asked questions, and they got the notion I was brighter than I looked. They let me sell papers, and I picked up so many regular customers that I was able to retire from the asylum and support myself. I got through school and through high school and through college and never owed a dollar: supported myself as I went along. That's my autobiography, with a bigger percentage of facts than most of them." And he laughed with a joviality that was infectious: every man in the room felt friendly to him.

"Did the orphan asylum give you your name, Mr. Hilary?" asked one of the members.

"Yes, made to order. Probably it was

meant for hilarious, but they cut it short as they used to our rations."

"Didn't they give you enough to eat?"

"No growing boy ever gets enough to eat. They used to make the slices of bread so thin that I told the matron once I could eat them faster than she could cut them. She asked how long, and I said till I starved."

They talked over school matters with him and found him sagacious. He related experiences that were funny but that showed sense. "Discipline doesn't trouble me," he said. "I watch ahead. When the boy does a thing he does it suddenly, uncertainly, wondering what will happen. I have seen it coming and I know what will happen. I have the best of him." It developed that he had learned jiu-jitsu and the Norwegian twist. He had never

had to use them but he had them at hand, and did not feel afraid of even preponderant physical force. "But really," he said confidentially, "it never gets to that. We talk it over and I get the boy to laughing and we become very good friends." He had already made the school board very good friends and they hired him.

II

Some way he took with the school from the start. He was the first to joke at his deformities, and anticipated anything that came up which might suggest them. If he had come close to his pupils and attempted to touch them they might have felt repulsion, but he was never personally familiar even with the youngest children.

He was inexhaustibly interesting in class. It seemed as if he knew every schoolroom joke that had been evolved and had them

a contract for the rest of the year. I knew that had been safe enough with Mr. Appleton and so agreed, thinking to save you a lot of trouble. She has just come to my office. She seems absolutely impossible, and on inquiry I found that she did not come from Mr. Appleton's agency at all, but from another one started there to pick up crumbs on his reputation from those who do not distinguish the names. Her name is Magnesia Pond, which alone should have put me on my guard. Next time I will not be so hasty, but take your advice. See if there is anything we can do with her. Apparently we must pay her a salary for the rest of the year."

IV

Magnesia Pond certainly did seem hopeless. She was incredibly slovenly. Her hands and face looked as if they had not

been washed in a week, her hair was half down, her teeth were unbrushed, her clothes were cheaply made and unbecoming, her shoes were too small so that her foot splayed way over the sole. How could such a woman have got a college degree?

If she must be paid a salary he would rather have it paid to her to stay in Ipswich, but she had been engaged under so many misrepresentations of the agency that it must be easy enough to persuade her to give up the contract. "It is best to be frank with you," Mr. Hilary said. "If Mr. Fargo had seen you he would not have engaged you. You would not be happy or successful in this school. It would be better for you not to try to teach here, but to return to Ipswich tonight."

"I haven't money to go back to Ipswich," she said. "I gave my last dollar for com-

mission to Mr. Butterwell, the Ipswich agency man. He said the contract was good for the rest of the year and could not be broken."

"The contract was made under false representations as to your qualifications and is not binding; but apart from that it can be of no benefit to you to begin where you are sure to fail."

"I am sure to fail anywhere. I always have failed and I always shall. This contract gives me bread and butter till July 1."

"O no, the law does not saddle an incompetent teacher upon a school. It will be easy to annul your contract, perhaps your certificate, and that without much delay. You have been unfairly treated by the agency and I will undertake to get back the money you paid Mr. Butterwell. In fact I will advance it to you now if you

will sign a release of your contract and give me an order on him."

"What will be the use? This is the fifth school I have been engaged in and no one of them has kept me a week. There is nothing else I can do except sell myself. And I am too homely to fetch much."

It was the first time Mr. Hilary had been brought face to face with a woman who seriously contemplated disgrace for a means of support. It shocked him, and yet there was some truth in it. No one would engage such a sloppy creature even for housework. To send her back to Ipswich was to shove her into the gutter. All his life he would feel the responsibility as his. How could he save her?

V

Then occurred to him a Quixotic project. School was running easily, he had

never before in his life been so free from anxiety, he had leisure for a greater work for others than he had ever tried: what if he should undertake to make a teacher out of this desperate young woman put into his hands? He looked her over to see what possibilities she had. Her language was correct, her voice was low, her scholarship was probably accurate: that was much. Her hair made her look like a fright, but as he looked closely he saw that it was abundant and of that chestnut that has a different shade for every beam of sunlight: properly done up it would be a crown of beauty. Her teeth showed what she ate for her last meal, but at least the shells were regular and all there: a dentist could make them an attraction. She was round-shouldered and slouchy, but if

that were corrected her figure was of good proportions. Her hands—

He would experiment. "Miss Pond," he said, "suppose I should undertake not only to keep you here but to make your work as teacher successful, would you let me speak very plainly and give you advice that should have come long ago from some one very near to you?"

She looked up indifferently. "You may experiment on me all you want to," she said. "I can't be any worse off."

He shrank from the task. He had been so long scrupulously neat himself that even to see such neglect was repulsive. To touch her, to teach her what she should have learned from her nurse was loathsome. Yet he could not send her to any one else till he had made sure she had possibilities of improvement.

He went to the basin in the corner and turned on hot water enough to make the contents tepid. "Let your right hand soak in that a few minutes," he said.

"May I wash it?" she asked.

"Yes," he replied: and he was glad to see that she washed both hands till he came to see how they still both looked. Then he placed her right hand upon a towel on the table, took out a pocket nail set, and began to manicure the hand, cleaning and rounding and polishing the nails, pushing down the cuticle, and incidentally reducing the accumulated layers of grime until the hand was fairly white. She looked on with incredulous interest until he had finished, when he said, "Now put your left hand beside it."

Even she was startled. She had not believed a few minutes could make such a

difference, that any number of minutes could have made her hand look so like a lady's. But it would be a good deal of trouble. "Do you expect me to spend that amount of time on my hands every day?" she asked.

"It won't be necessary every day after your hands are once got into condition," he said. "What I have done is only an imitation of the work of a real manicurist. I want you to go back to Ipswich tonight, and introduce yourself to the superintendent of the Y. W. C. A. We used to be fellow teachers, and I will give you a letter to her that will make her the best friend you have in the world. She will give you a Turkish bath, she will show you how to dress your hair, she will buy you clothing that is handsome and becoming, and she will put you on the train back

here Monday morning such a different woman that you won't know yourself. That different woman you will be I will undertake to make succeed in this school. There is ten dollars in money and a check for a hundred. You see I have faith in you: have faith in yourself."

Magnesia was bewildered and incredulous, but she took the money and as there was just time for the train she hurried to it.

The superintendent of the Y. W. C. A. was a remarkable woman. Up to the time she taught with Mr. Hilary at Phillippi she had seemed only ordinary, but somehow the two without becoming in the least sentimental, in fact preserving quite formal relation, reacted on each other to the great advantage of both. He found himself understood and trusted as never be-

fore and began to hope for higher things than had seemed possible. She grew confident in a service to others that she had hitherto rendered shyly, and had often withheld because she did not dare proffer it.

Her management of an organization of girls in the little school attracted the attention of an Ipswich philanthropist, and when the directors of the Y. W. C. A. decided that it was no longer necessary to retain a superintendent whose face would turn Jersey cream sour he persuaded them to elect Claudia Marr. It was difficult to persuade Claudia that she was capable, but she had proved a treasure. The more a girl needed a friend the more surely she found and recognized a friend in Claudia. So when Mr. Hilary telephoned to her in how desperate straits she would find Magnesia Pond, she met the girl at the station,

and in an hour had won her confidence completely.

VI

Magnesia's mother was a clergyman's daughter who had spent the summer after graduation from college in an Adirondack hotel, where the young men guests seemed so spiritless that she fell in love with the engineer, a handsome and vigorous fellow who had saved her life when her canoe tipped over. He was illiterate and grimy, but she ran away with him and married him. Though he was still illiterate and grimy and worked at his trade they were happy together, and when she died in giving birth to a daughter, Martin Pond's one thought was to bring up the child to be like her mother. In his eyes what had distinguished the mother was her university education, and he immediately made

a will providing that all he might leave behind should be devoted to making Magnesia a college graduate. Within a year he was suddenly killed by an accident in the works, with blame so manifestly upon the proprietor that settlement was made for seven thousand dollars.

In the eyes of the executor, a fellow workman of like limitations, this was an enormous sum, and he looked about for some one to bring up Magnesia to go to college. There was in town a woman who was known to be a graduate of a small university: who had in fact gone on to take a medical course and tried to practise, but who was so peculiar in her looks and attire and manners that these alone without her disadvantage of sex would have prevented success. She lived solitary in what was not much more than a

hovel. Yet her scholarship was recognized, she had served on the school board, she was often appealed to as an authority. Why was not she the one to undertake Magnesia's training?

The executor went to her and offered her four hundred dollars a year to take entire charge of the child, giving her board, clothes, and education. To the woman this was wealth and she undertook the trust.

VII

She carried it out conscientiously. She gave Magnesia sound instruction, which at eighteen made entrance to college easy. But she cared nothing herself for the niceties, even for what to most seem the decencies of life, and Magnesia had grown to womanhood without even conception of the commonest principles of refinement.

In the mean time the executor had died and this woman had succeeded him. She sent Magnesia to the university where she herself had been educated, still a struggling Ohio institution where the feeble faculty was so overworked in going the round of recitations that it made little effort to look after the personal habits of its students. So Magnesia had been graduated still ignorant of what a well-bred child would have been taught before she was two years old.

Naturally she had not made friends. The nicer girls shuddered when she approached: she had grown to regard herself anathema without knowing why. So whatever fine qualities she had inherited from her mother had lain dormant. Affection, sympathy, thought for others were known to her only intellectually. She was the

most unlovable person Claudia had even seen. Just for that reason Claudia's heart went out to her as never before to a human being.

"If it is not profane to say so," Mr. Hilary had telephoned, "I think there is a chance to save a soul." No other prize in life could have so appealed to Claudia. All Saturday and Sunday she spent with the girl, and she sent her back to Falmouth not only clean and well-gowned and attractive looking but with new ideas of life and of her relations to her fellow-beings. Every Friday night Magnesia returned to Ipswich, and every Saturday and Sunday she was Claudia's companion, till Claudia began to love her not for what she needed but for what she was. The transformation was incredible.

VIII

It was part of Magnesia's new nature to be grateful, and she recognized that all that had come to her she owed alike to Mr. Hilary and to Claudia. Toward the close of the year, when they had been looking over together some of her pupil's work and were alone after school she said as much, and that she wished there were some way to repay something of her debt. Mr. Hilary looked at her admiringly, and with what seemed a sudden purpose but was really a determination after weeks of consideration he said, "I know a way by which you could a good deal more than repay me for any help I have given you."

"What is it?" she asked eagerly: she felt the harder it was the more she would joy in doing it.

"Do you suppose you could love a mis-

shapen thing like me well enough to marry me?" he asked abruptly.

An expression of horror came over her face, as though on lifting a shoe to put it on she had found a viper in it.

Mr. Hilary laughed merrily. "Caught you that time," he said; "you really thought you were getting your first offer."

"Didn't you mean it?" she asked, relief breaking over her features, which still retained their terrified expression.

"Mean it?" he laughed again as though it were the best joke in the world. "Marriage isn't for me. I am like the mule, without pride of ancestry or hope of posterity. No, I was just trying you, to see whether you were still fancy-free or whether already some swain had piped of love to you."

"No, indeed," she replied, blushing.

"O well, he will come one of these days with a straight body and, be it hoped, with a keen mind and a good heart as well. Tell me the first when you are sure of it, will you?"

So he really had not meant it. She tried to be as friendly and grateful as ever—yet never again could she look at him without a shudder.

IX

A few days later while Mr. Hilary was walking home from school with some of the smaller children little Pauline Nasmyth started to run across the road as an automobile approached. She would have got across safely had not one of the other children cried, "Pauline! Pauline! Look out!" The child turned, saw the automobile, and was paralyzed with terror. She stood still as the machine too close

to turn bore down upon her. The other children screamed, but Mr. Hilary sprang forward and threw himself under the machine as with his long arms he drew the child to one side. She was saved, but he could not with his short, twisted legs withdraw in time to save himself, and the heavy machine passed over his chest: the children declared they could hear his ribs crack as the wheels crushed them in. He was a pitiful looking object as they drew him out of the road, but he retained his senses, and he exclaimed in tones difficult of utterance but merry as ever, "What luck! I always hoped to end up something like this but I didn't suppose it would come my way. Tell Pauline there isn't a girl in the village I would have rather have rescued."

X

The surgeon said there was no hope and it was only a question of hours, but though the pain was great Mr. Hilary refused to take an anaesthetic, and seemed to enjoy talking with Dr. Lyndhurst, his clergyman, who alone stayed by him.

"It was a great endowment to be born with a disposition like yours," the good man said.

Mr. Hilary looked at him meditatively a moment, and then replied, "Would you like to know what my disposition really is?"

"We all know what it is: your cheerfulness is invincible."

"This is the end of it all and I believe I should like to own up that it is all assumed."

"Impossible," exclaimed Dr. Lyndhurst.

"There isn't in the village another man

as profane as I. When I am alone and think of myself I swear like a trooper."

The clergyman was horror-stricken.

"I laugh at my deformity. Why? To make others laugh less. In my heart of hearts I hate it and them. Why am I merry? Because it is the only way I can get myself endured. Today I gave up my life for a little girl. Is she here to see me? Is her mother here? her father? Even the doctor was glad to be able to say no skill could save me, for he wanted to get away from my horrible ugliness which my bandages and scars make hideous. You stay not because you want to but because it is your duty. You are a good man, a real minister, serving your fellow-men, but even you have not once put your hand upon my shoulder or taken my hand as you would of any other man in the village. I saved

a girl ready to degrade herself for a living. I gave her all that was best in me, I made her a lady, and I asked her to marry me. She shuddered as if she had put a hand into her muff and found a cold, clammy, hissing serpent there. In all the world I have not been able to do enough for anybody to inspire affection. All I have been able to secure is to be endured in spite of myself because I was funny. When I think of it I go raving and curse the God that made me crooked."

It was Dr. Jaeckel and Mr. Hyde again. Who could have believed the merry teacher's face could have become hideous as this? The good man shuddered but he did not falter. "Were you happier when you gave way to these paroxysms?" he asked.

"No," Mr. Hilary confessed, his face

softening. "No, I always suffered after them. I shall suffer for this. I was ready to die, but I am all upset again."

"You have not got a great deal out of life for yourself," the clergyman said, "but think what you have done for others."

The old expression came back. "I have helped some," he said.

"That is about all any of us get out of life," said the good man gently, and he took the dying man's hand in sympathy and affection manifestly genuine.

Mr. Hilary's smile grew beatific, but he had spoken his last word. The exertion of his anger had been too much, and his heart ceased to beat. The only wholly happy moment of his life was his last.

• A MATTER OF MARKING

A MATTER OF MARKING

I

When Sidney Thurlow came to Muggleton as candidate for principal there were thirty applicants, but Lucas Vincent, president of the board, took to him from the first, secured his election, and immediately gave him full confidence and support. He invited Sidney to his home so often that the teacher took more meals there than at his boarding-place. Finally he approved of Sidney's engagement to his only child. He consulted Sidney upon more than school matters. He was the foremost lawyer in the country, and he got into the way of talking over important cases with the principal, finding that Sid-

ney's views, based not on precedent but on equity, were usually those of intelligent jurymen. He had suggested to Sidney to study law and presently take up practice, offering a partnership that would have insured a fortune. But Sidney would not consider it. "I love my work," he said. "When I walk up to the schoolhouse in the morning and find six hundred pupils waiting for me, every one of whom I know and like and feel that I am doing something for, I wouldn't swap their smiles of welcome for all your big fees."

II

Early in May the two men were discussing an impending special meeting to vote bonds for a new building. There was no question as to the need, but the board wanted a building wholly up to date,

with gymnasium, shower baths, a swimming pool.

"I have gone over the village pretty carefully," said Mr. Vincent, "and I think we can carry it. If we can get Simon Trevor with us we are sure of it."

"He ought to be with us," replied Sidney; "his son is the brightest boy in school."

"Will he get the valedictory?"

"He has an even chance for it. His only rival is Olive Safford. She is a wonder."

"How do they stand?"

"Neck and neck, sometimes Owen ahead, sometimes Olive. On four years work they are not at this minute a half percent apart."

"You do most of the marking, don't you?"

"Yes, three of their four recitations a day are to me. The other is to Miss

Wyman, in algebra. She hardly ever varies from giving each a hundred per cent."

"High marking, isn't it?"

"No, low. If they recited algebra to me I should often mark them above one hundred."

"How could you do that?"

"A hundred percent represents what may fairly be expected of a pupil. Neither of them has once failed of that this term, in any subject. There must be recognition of what they do beyond that."

"Then you think perfect may be compared: perfect, more perfect, most perfect."

"No, but a recitation may be more than perfect. Suppose you had been Milton's schoolmaster when the subject was the turning of water into wine and his composition was, 'The conscious water saw its

God and blushed'. Would you be satisfied to mark him one hundred percent?"

"I don't suppose either Owen or Olive is a Milton."

"But they are extraordinary pupils, and they offer in recitation a lot more than is asked for. In geometry, for instance, Owen gave the demonstration in the book one day, and then asked if he might put on the board another demonstration of his own. I invited him to do it, and it was fully as complete and as convincing as that in the text. How could I help giving him more than perfect for that unrequired and unexpected contribution?"

"Are your marks made public?"

"No, I am keeping them to the end of the year. I don't want to make too much of marks in the daily lesson."

"Then Owen and Olive do not know how they stand relatively?"

"All the class know that the two are way in advance of the rest, but there is much speculation as to which is ahead of the other. In fact it may vary any week, just now any day."

"Sidney, if Simon Trevor knew Owen was to have the valedictory he would not only vote for our hundred-thousand-dollar schoolhouse but advocate it."

"You may tell him that Owen stands an even chance."

"I want to tell him more than that: I want to tell him Owen will be valedictorian."

"Nobody can tell that till after the regents examinations."

"He might be so far ahead before the

regents examinations that they would not affect the result."

"That is wholly improbable."

"But nobody knows it and you do the marking. It lies in your hands to give us the swimming pool."

"Of course you don't mean that you want me to mark the two any other way than fairly, Mr. Vincent."

"Sidney, you are a mighty fine fellow and I like you, as you know. But in some ways you are ingenuous to the point of immaturity. At your age one still clings to ideals, the boy stood on the burning deck whence all but him had fled style. But as you get older you will see that we must all look for the larger good. It makes very little difference whether Owen Trevor or Olive Safford gets the valedictory: it makes a great difference whether we get

a modern schoolhouse. Now I want you to assure me that Owen will be valedictorian, and I will see that we get the schoolhouse."

"I can hardly believe that you seriously ask me to do a dishonest act, Mr. Vincent."

"It isn't dishonest, Sidney. These two youngsters' recitations have passed beyond numerical estimation and are in the realm of fanciful record. Let the record be such that we shall get the new building we want."

"Why, I couldn't do that, Mr. Vincent, any more than I could give any but a true judgment if I were referee in a hundred-yard dash. All contests assume the fairness of the umpire."

"Where there is nothing else at stake you may be unbiased, but if a war between two nations depended upon which of two

runners crossed the line first and if so far as you could see they breasted the line together, what would you do?"

"Say so, of course; what else could I do?"

"And bring on a war you might have prevented?"

"That is not my responsibility. All that is asked of me is to be honest."

"Let us descend from the abstract to the concrete. I am going to talk to you confidentially. A man starts out in life to earn his bread and butter; then he saves up for sickness and old age and makes provision for those dependent on him. When he has accomplished that and money is still coming in he looks around to see where he can make himself useful to his community. This outside work of mine has been on the school board. I have served twenty years and most of the time

I have been in control. I have given the school a lot of time and attention, more than my clients could have got for a hundred thousand dollars. I want to crown that work by putting up the best schoolhouse in the county, the only schoolhouse in the county fitted for modern methods. It lies with you to make my twenty years a success or a failure. Think of that, as well as of what such a building will do for this community. As your friend and supporter, as your father soon to be, I ask you to see that Owen is valedictorian."

"Mr. Vincent, you have been more than kind to me and I am deeply grateful. Any service it is in my power to give will be a pride and a pleasure. But when you ask me to be untrue to my pupils you reach the impossible. I cannot do it."

"Sidney, you disappoint me. You are letting your smug conscience stand between you and a great work you can do for others."

"Really, Mr. Vincent, I cannot discuss it. To mark those two pupils any other way than they seem to me to deserve would be absolutely impossible: I cannot even contemplate it. There are some things a man can't do for anybody or for any purpose, and one of them is to betray a trust."

"You do not seem to see that you are accusing me of dishonesty."

"I do not undertake to judge you, Mr. Vincent. I speak only for myself."

"If we differ so much on so vital a question, Mr. Thurlow, perhaps it would be well not to remain in my house any longer or to come here any more."

"I will retire at once, Mr. Vincent, and I promise not to intrude again."

"And it will be no longer desirable that your engagement with Iris should continue."

Sidney paused for a moment. Then he said sadly, "It is not right in my eyes that a lover should come between an only child and a devoted father. You may say to your daughter that I release her from her engagement."

"And it would be a mighty good time for you to resign."

"That proposition is a tempting one but I cannot see my way clear to accept it. I am hired for the year, and I must take care of my school till the year is ended."

"You will find it an uncomfortable six weeks."

"Very likely. I am sorry we are disappointed in each other. Good night Mr. Vincent."

"Good night and be damned to you."

The next day a messenger from Mr. Vincent's office brought Sidney a small package, saying there was no word and no answer. It contained Iris's engagement ring.

III

It proved indeed an uncomfortable six weeks. Astonishment over the changed relations of the principal with the family of the board was not concealed. One good woman went so far as to ask Sidney why he was not going to marry Iris. "When a woman breaks an engagement it is not necessary for her to give a reason," he replied gravely, but the answer only whetted curiosity. He confined himself closely

to his work, accepted no invitations, and surmised gossip and mistrust even where they did not exist. If he chanced to meet Iris on the street both bowed coldly but neither spoke.

IV

It was harder upon him than he expected. Proud as he was, impossible as it would be to yield to Mr. Vincent or to dream of an intimacy which she and her father disapproved, to give her up took the light out of his life.

He had never before had much to do with women. Left an orphan at eight and brought up in a boys school, he had seen girls only in vacations and on visits. They had seemed to him pleasant enough creatures to dance or play tennis with, and he had a fluent store of compliments and light conversation to bestow upon

them: but he had never even tried to talk to one of them.

When he first began to visit the Vincents he saw in Iris only a pretty girl of the usual type, and she was not especially interested in him. When the meal was over and her father sat down to converse with his guest she used to disappear. But by and by she began to listen, to sit down in the room where they were, to ask a question now and then, presently, as much to her father's surprise as to Sidney's, to take part in the conversation. Before long the dialogue had extended to include her, and her suggestions were intelligent and keen. The men began to value and seek her judgment. Her father realized he had never appreciated her.

V

Sidney felt that he would like to consult her on some problems of his own, and little by little she became his confidante. He talked with her by the hour, and often came to the house expressly to see her.

One evening he observed that when they shook hands at parting he had grown into the habit of holding hers. As he thought of it he reflected that he rather liked it, and as she did not object, probably she liked it too. Then as he thought of the evening before, it occurred to him that there was a sort of wistfulness in her eye, as though she would have liked something more.

The realization came to him with a shock. It must be the outpost of that love of which he had heard so much and experienced so little. At first he recog-

nized it as his own inclination for her, but he felt there might be a reciprocity. He had never thought of marriage except in the distant future, but it might not be impossible. He had two years salary in the bank, he was in demand as a teacher, he could support a wife modestly. He was hardly a match for Iris, a wealthy and charming belle, but if she really was attracted toward him the relation was not inconceivable.

When he had reasoned thus far he felt that his first step was to lay the possibility before her father, to see if he would approve.

"Mr. Vincent," he said one evening, "may I ask you a presumptuous question?"

"You may ask me anything you like," replied the father. "Possibly it may not seem presumptuous to me."

"I find that I am growing fond of your daughter in a way that will make me want to ask her to be my wife. If she were willing, should you think me a fitting husband?"

"My boy," the father replied, "for weeks that has been my wish. I have never before seen the man to whom I was willing to entrust my daughter."

"Then I shall make bold to ask her."

"You may ask her now and here;" and Mr. Vincent summoned her.

She came in looking inquiringly at the two men. "Iris," Sidney said, holding out his hand, "your father is good enough to approve of my asking you to be my wife. It is the dearest wish of my heart."

There was no coquetry. She took his hand and laid her head on his shoulder.

"I will try to be a good wife to you," she said.

They were to have been married at the close of the term, and they had joyed in planning for their journey and their home. They had seemed one in thought, in wish, in ideal. Not till they were thus separated had he realized how intertwined with hers his thought and his life had become. It was heart-wrenching to feel that she was his no longer. It had been forced; he could not have acted otherwise; anything possible her father might have asked and Sidney would have delighted in complying, but a man's honor is not his to yield. He wondered if Iris cared. There had come no word or look, but he had himself decided that if choice was inevitable she must cling to her father. Perhaps if she did not care it was all the better.

VI

On the Friday before regents examinations Sidney said to his class. "Now we have finished our preparation for these tests and you are ready for them. I don't want you to look into a book or think of a subject till next Monday. You are all well prepared. Unless the questions given are extraordinary every one of you will pass. You needn't worry about them, before or during or after. Keep cool, work deliberately, if any question bothers you drop it for the time and take up another, coming back to it only after you have done the rest. I am not a bit afraid about your getting through, and you need not be."

VII

On Tuesday morning Owen Trevor was not present, and word went round

that he had not slept the night before: the physician had forbidden him to do more work this week. Before the papers were opened Olive Safford came up to the desk. "Mr. Thurlow," she said, "will you excuse me from the rest of the examinations this week, and let me take them whenever Owen does?"

"Why do you ask that, Olive?"

"Because it would be so mean to take advantage of him. We have been contending together for four years, and it would spoil it all to go on when he is out of it."

"My dear child," said Sidney, his eyes glistening, "you make me proud and happy. But there is another way of reaching the same result. If your mother and the board of education approve, we can let the contest between you and Owen for the

valedictory close with the examination of yesterday. You can take the other examinations with the understanding that they do not count as between Owen and you."

"Thank you, Mr. Thurlow: that will be much better." And she went to her seat with beaming face.

VIII

As soon as he could get away Sidney went to Mr. Trevor's house. He found Owen in bed, his father at his side. "I really ought to be in school," the boy said, "but the doctor insisted and I don't want my father to worry."

"How did you come to overdo?" asked his teacher.

"It wasn't anything about the examination. I answered all the questions easily enough, and as I had an hour to spare I went back over them to pick out one for a

fuller treatment. I hit on that one about the Eikon Basilike, and I wrote a sort of essay on Charles I. Somehow the pathos of it got hold of me—that king brought up to believe in royal prerogative and perhaps after all trying to do the best he could from his point of view, and after the hour was up and I had not written half what I wanted to, I was sort of excited over it and kept thinking about it and couldn't get it out of my mind when I went to bed. So I got into something like a fever, and they called in the doctor."

"Quite right they were, too, Owen, but I am glad you didn't worry about the examination."

"Not in the least. Well, this ends the race between Olive and me. She wins and she deserves to."

"She won't take it that way, Owen.

She wanted to stay away from the examinations till January when you could take them too, and she wouldn't go in today till I promised her nothing after yesterday should count as between you and her for the valedictory."

Tears came into the boy's eyes and he grasped his teacher's hand. "That is just like her," he said. "What a trump Olive is. Of course I can't take advantage of her offer, but I am mighty glad she made it."

"I think you can take advantage of it, Owen. I called on her mother on the way here, and she was delighted that Olive had made the proposition. Olive would never have been satisfied if she had won by an accident, she said."

"It isn't an accident, Mr. Thurlow. The fact that I give out under the same

work that she carries through shows that she is of better stuff. No, I couldn't accept her sacrifice."

"To tell the truth, Owen, I don't believe the papers this week would have changed the result had you passed them all. Your two for yesterday I marked exactly the same, and I think the regents will. So it is perfectly fair to close the contest between you with last night, and I know Olive will be a great deal happier. Don't you think that is the best way, Mr. Trevor?"

Thus far the father had listened without making remark, showing less interest than could have been expected, Sidney thought. But when appealed to he replied, "I think we may safely leave it to Mr. Thurlow, Owen." And it was so arranged.

IX

On Friday of examination week the twice-adjourned school meeting was held, and just before it the board got together, asking the principal to be present. There was no longer any chance of carrying through the larger appropriation, and it was agreed after the vote failed to let the substitute go through and end the hopeless contest.

"Before you adjourn, gentlemen," the principal said, "I should like to ask your assent to a proposition made by Olive Safford that since Owen Trevor is unable to take his other three examinations this week the marking for class honors close with Monday night. She does not want to take advantage of his illness."

A motion to that effect was made and carried.

"How do they stand?" asked one of the members.

"It should not be announced yet, but a careful reckoning for four years shows that they are even to the one-hundredth of a per cent. They will have to draw lots for the valedictory, and the programme must state not only that their rank is the highest ever attained in this school, but that in the case of both pupils it is identical."

As they went out Mr. Vincent could not refrain from saying angrily to Sidney, "And for a hundredth of a percent you have lost this village a hundred-thousand-dollar schoolhouse."

X

At the school meeting, Mr. Vincent rose and presented the proposition of the board, but he did it spiritlessly, his manner

acknowledging the defeat impending. When he sat down Simon Trevor arose as was expected, and there was great applause from the opponents of the larger appropriation, for Mr. Trevor was a powerful speaker.

"Mr. President," he began, "I move an amendment to the amount of this appropriation. I am a man of strong prejudices. I usually make up my mind about matters pretty early, and when I have announced myself I stay there with both feet. I have always been proud of it. I have brought up my boy to do the same thing. Till lately he has followed in my footsteps. Since Mr. Thurlow has been principal of this school my boy has changed. I look on only one side of a matter. He has been learning to look on both sides. Often when I have been telling him what I think

he has suggested, 'But, father, how do the other people look at it?' First it amused me, then it interested me, finally I began to admire it. 'Put yourself in his place,' he says to me sometimes. I never used to do that but I am beginning to see there is something in it. I have always tried to be honest but I have taken all that belonged to me. I have been learning from him that sometimes what is mine may belong to another fellow.

"When I was graduated from this school I was the valedictorian. My father was valedictorian of the school he went to. My grandfather was valedictorian of the academy he attended. My son is a better scholar than all three of us put together and I wanted him to be valedictorian of this school. He had an even chance till last Monday night. He had got too ex-

cited over some extra work he was putting into the examination, no fault of the examination or of Mr. Thurlow but just an active mind set a going, and he couldn't sleep. The doctor said he must drop the rest of the regents examinations for this term. That gave the valedictory hands down to Olive Safford. Did she take it? Not she. She refused to go into examination herself until she was assured that it shouldn't count in the contest. Mr. Thurlow came to my house and told my boy. Did he shout, 'Hooray, then I may win out after all'? No, sir; the tears came into his eyes and he said, 'That's just like Olive Safford, but I can't take advantage of her generosity.' Now, ladies and gentlemen, I want to say that a school where there is that kind of feeling among scholars—and talking with some of you I find you

have noticed it in your children—is a mighty fine school to have in this community. Latin and Greek and algebra and geometry are all well enough, but what we want is character. A school that makes its pupils fair-minded and generous is a benefit to the community that we cannot measure, and that we are recognizing only decently when we give it all that it needs. I understand that in asking for a hundred thousand dollars the board of education had to pare off some features they needed for this new building. I move as an amendment that the appropriation be a hundred and ten thousand dollars.”

A wave of applause swept over the room, and there was not a vote in the negative.

X

The members of the board crowded around Sidney to express their appreciation, but when he had modestly got away from them Mr. Vincent put a hand on his shoulder. "Will you come home with me, Sidney?" he asked.

Sidney accepted the proffered hand, and made light of the proffered apologies. When they had reached the house Mr. Vincent asked, "May I call Iris?"

"If you knew how I have longed to see her again," replied Sidney, his voice choking.

When she came down Mr. Vincent said to her, "Iris, you told me that you would obey me, but that some time I would beg Sidney to come back. You were right. I begged him to come and he is here."

XI

What they said? What's the use?
Those who would understand know already.

THREE MONTHS NOTICE

THREE MONTHS NOTICE

I

"Isn't an operation possible?"

"No. Surgeons do marvelous things; the eye is removed for treatment and even the heart is handled, but in your case the least touch would only anticipate the suffocation."

"And I can't delay the catastrophe by careful living?"

"No. You are evidently a man of good habits, but if you were dissipated the date would not vary much. One of my patients felt aggrieved that all his life he had avoided wine and women for the sake of his health, and when told that in spite of his precautions he had only two months to live

he swore that in those two months he would make up for lost time. I rather think he would have died of his dissipation alone before long, but the abscess broke on almost the day I predicted. The growth is inevitable and nearly invariable."

"You will excuse my suggesting it, but I so love my life and my work: are there other surgeons in this country or Europe whom I could consult?"

"Of my nine patients with this complaint, one was sent to me by Sir Richard Sampson, the greatest specialist in England, and another by Professor Viradow, the most eminent specialist on the Continent. Here is the *American Journal of Anatomy* for last June with a paper on this unusual disease which I contributed. You will observe the editorial comment that I am the recognized authority. Here is

the same article with the same comment translated into French for the *Journal de l'Anatomie et de la Physiologie* and here translated into German for the *Ergebnisse der Anatomie und Entwicklungsgeschichte*. I am afraid you will find no appeal from my judgment."

"And you give me three months?"

"Almost exactly. This is February 19. It is safe to say that so far as this affection is concerned you will be alive on May 15 and that you will not be alive on June 1."

"Shall I suffer pain?"

"Not seriously. There will be a growing pressure of which you will be conscious and which will annoy you if you let your mind dwell on it. But it will not be painful, and when it bursts the suffocation will be too instantaneous to give you suffering."

"Then I can do my regular work?"

"Up to the last moment. Your appetite will continue, your mind will be clear, even your voice will not be much affected. No one will surmise that you are not in perfect health."

"I suppose I need not ask that this consultation be secret?"

"No one will learn from me that you have come to me."

"Thank you. I accept your diagnosis and your prophecy, and will complete my little life accordingly."

II

Usually Caleb Doane went home from New York by the midnight train, looking about after his work was done, and in the evening attending opera or theatre; but this time when he came out of the physician's office he went straight to the

station. He wanted to think, and he was likely to be undisturbed on the cars.

Three months. How short it seemed. Which of all the undertakings he had projected could be completed?

First to be considered, of course, was his graduating class, twenty-two boys and girls, every one of them going to college. May 15. He could get them pretty well in shape by that time. He had no fear of the regents examinations; every member of the class would get through if they were held to-morrow. They would do themselves and the school credit in college if he never gave them another recitation, but there was still a lot of polishing he wanted to do.

He took out the vest-pocket book in which each member of the class had two pages.

"Man, I want!" he would, and the
remembrance through which, as time
drew, "Oh, that good!" He smiled,
recalled how that came to be across
himself. Man had found himself
mastering the future passive of
conjugation. One Thanksgiving
happened that he and Man
gather to the post-office, a good
he said to the boys, "Now, when
you that passive future of re-
they taught, when repeat
again, again," and so on, "I
say it forward or backward
in the middle, and then apply
in all sorts of sentences till
were sure he could never fail.
There were times during
Man's mood was not of
but when they got to the

he realized that this difficulty was overcome for all time he parted from his teacher gratefully.

The next memorandum for Max was not erased, though there was a question-mark against it. "Boastfulness?" Max was still inclined to this failing, though he had partially overcome it. Mr. Doane underscored the word; in the three months left he must labor hard with Max to root out this fault.

So he went on through the list, reflecting upon every memorandum that was uncrossed, and planning to get at them as early and as persistently as possible.

When he came to Sabrina Zabel he dwelt longest on her, not only because she was the last but because she was in a way his by right of discovery. When he came to Albertsville the board had named her as

one who would probably have to be sent to an institution for the mentally deficient. She was inattentive, slow of understanding and of speech, had failed of promotion year after year. It was some time before he could get her confidence, but when she found that he was really listening, interested in what she said, and sympathetic with many of her thoughts that she had supposed to be abnormal, she became a new creature. She not only passed her grades but had skipped two, and was now recognized as one of the soundest pupils in the class. It seemed her mind had been not empty but clogged by a too fertile imagination; it had been as difficult for her ideas to find utterance as for water to flow from a full bottle. She would undoubtedly be salutatorian, and he looked to see her rank among the brilliant students at Smith.

How he would like to follow her course through college, giving her here and there a suggestion. He resolved to write four letters of counsel to her, one to be opened at the beginning of each of her college years. What a happiness it was to have been the means of finding utterance for her.

"Yes," he said to himself as he closed his book, "I can feel that my graduating class will every one go into the world plus factors."

III

Then he turned his attention to the school as a whole. He had been happy here. He had been fortunate to follow an inefficient principal, and had got more than the credit due for easy and capable management. He prided himself that he had not forced the discharge of a single

teacher. Some had dropped out to marry or to retire from the work, but always to his regret. Those who remained were not of uniform excellence. They all had faults which needed counsel and repeated suggestion, but they all had excellencies and were women of character. In these three months he must impress it with more than usual emphasis upon Miss Auringer to let the children do more of the talking; upon Miss Cabeen to review more constantly, making sure a principle was not only learned but applied; upon Miss Hamlin to have more patience with laggards, and so on. But it was a good corps of teachers; he could leave the school to them with assurance that it would do satisfactory work to the end of the term without him.

He had accumulated a good deal of

authority in his five years. When he went there everything had been done by committees. Now nearly everything was entrusted to him: he hired the teachers, he bought the supplies, he determined what should be asked for at school meeting. He had not assumed this power: it was given to him little by little as the board saw how capable and how modest he was in exercising it. Best of all, he had made this a habit of mind of the school board. They trusted him not simply as an individual but as principal of the school, and had come to see these were powers the principal should have: he had made it easy for his successor.

Yes, the school was running well, with healthy momentum; his loss would not be seriously felt the rest of the year.

IV

How about his outside work? This presented a good many problems. He was always a busy man, with many things under way. For one thing, he had the memorandum habit. When a child made a queer reply he jotted it down at the time, so that it might have the clean-cut exactness of a coin fresh from the mint. If he hit upon a happy explanation in recitation, he noted it as soon as the class went out, used it next time, elaborated it till he had polished it to the best form to reach a class. He remembered Emerson's definition of manners as the happy ways of doing things, originally a stroke of genius or of love, now hardened into habit; much of his power in recitation came from his habit of preserving and elaborating what proved to be the most universal explanations.

All these memoranda he had saved and put in numbered envelopes with card indexes so that they were always at hand. On some topics he had enough of them to make a chapter, and his contributions to school journals were always welcome. In one subject, geometry, he had been so successful in making it clear to pupils who had supposed they had no capacity for it, that he had gathered his memoranda into a volume almost ready to print. He was tempted to put a good part of the three months into that volume and leave behind him a published text-book. He deliberated over it a good while. Reluctantly he decided that there was too much else crowded necessarily into these three months to make it possible to finish this book satisfactorily, and he resolved to give the manuscript with all his other memoranda

to some fellow-teacher likely to appreciate them and use them.

In fact, before he went in to dinner he had determined to put all the outside time he had to spare into his coming paper before the county association. He was president this year, and the president's address was expected to occupy most of Friday evening. He had already chosen the subject and expended much thought upon it.

It was based on the familiar anecdote of the teacher who told a dull pupil in arithmetic, "When George Washington was your age he could solve that problem backward;" to which the pupil replied, "And when he was your age he was president of the United States." He felt that there was in the attitude of teachers toward their pupils an unnatural relation not corresponding with the facts; that the

teacher should realize that his boys and girls were not inferior beings but included all the superior minds of the community, and should be respected as sincerely in school as when they afterward became leaders. He was himself a listener; he always had time for real thought from the smallest pupil. He had learned a great deal that way, and his attitude toward his pupils had been influenced. They knew that he listened to them and comprehended them and sympathized with them, and they trusted him, not only in school but after they were graduated. He wanted in his coming address to inspire this relation between some other teachers and their pupils. If he could do it he would not have lived in vain. He resolved to devote all his work outside of school to this address, and to make it his swan

song. The date was May 13, within the safety line but on the edge. Very likely he should go from the association to the hospital, but he was happy to feel that the address was safe.

V

As he sat down in the dining-car he reflected that his relation to food was changed. All his life he had trained his appetite to crave the dishes that made sinew and endurance and clear judgment. A welsh rabbit at midnight was preposterously out of his desires. Once he was playing hearts in the club when two of the men ordered cheese sandwiches. The third looked on with growing eagerness and finally ordered one for himself. "My wife will be up all night with me," he remarked ruefully, "but I must have it." In ten minutes he had broken up the game

to go home and suffer, and he knew he would suffer all night when he ate it. To Caleb that was incomprehensible. It seemed to him a less reasonable yielding to appetite than to get drunk on liquor. If anything failed to agree with Caleb he never wanted it again.

But all his life he had been planning for old age. Now his life was measured, and the fact that a food would sometime in the distant future tend to gout or rheumatism did not signify. He felt like the prisoner on the morning he was to be hanged whom the kind hearted jailor invited to order anything he wanted for breakfast. "Give me buckwheat cakes and fried sausage," he cried. "I never could digest the blamed things, and this morning it won't make any difference."

But he found as he scrutinized the menu

that his habits were too fixed to make variation interesting. There was only one temptation. Once in London a friend had taken him to the quaint old Tavistock hotel in Covent Garden, telling him the cellar was the most reliable in England, and had shared with him a bottle of sparkling burgundy that was a revelation. Since then when he had thought of wine as an addition to a meal he had thought of that sparkling burgundy. It had not tempted him because the general effect was to produce gout. Now that this was no longer a danger he meditated over the wine-card some minutes before he decided not to order it. "I am content without it," he thought, "and for these three months I want my head crystal clear every minute." So he paid no more for his dinner than he had paid for his breakfast.

VI

When he got back to his seat he felt that he had reviewed the matters in which he had obligations to fulfil. He had never had debts, being a man of restricted desires and prompt payment. He had no quarrels with any one; there were people he did not agree with, but he had never found any one he could not be civil to even when called upon to reprove him. Since his father had died he had been practically alone in the world, his few relatives being distant and uncongenial.

And then, after resolutely thinking of everything else, he let his mind consciously consider Judith Goss, who had been a background of his thoughts all the while. For he loved Judith Goss. He had been just at the point of asking her to marry him when he began to perceive and worry

over this affection of the throat that did not wear off. She was not of the kind that accepts an offer before it is made: indeed he questioned if her soul were not too maidenly to recognize a man's love before it had found unmistakable expression. Yet he felt in his heart of hearts that she would have said yes.

How glad he was he perceived his danger before he had spoken. She could not have married a man whose disease was almost cancerous, possibly hereditary, and what an affliction it would be for her to worry over his approaching fate. Thank God, she need never know it. Nobody need know it. He would do his work undisturbed to the last day, and then he would go to a New York hospital and let the tidings reach his friends only as of sudden death.

Over one consideration he paused a while. If a woman really was the one woman to a man, was it not her right to know it? Perhaps there might be no other man to make that avowal, and if he did not speak she might think she went through life unloved. Judith was recognized as a choice woman, but there were few men to whom she would seem a possible wife. They would feel like Beatrice that if they married her they would want another mate for every day. Besides, they would not aspire to her. It had taken him five years to assume that possibly she might find in him enough of strength and truth to make up somewhat for his crudeness. Was it not her right to be told that he loved her above all other women?

He decided the gratification would not be enough to her to be worth the pain and

anxiety of sharing his secret. The woman's point of view was so different. As a man, of course he did not want to die in three months: he would avoid it if there were any way to escape; but since it was inevitable, all that was left was to adjust himself to it and make the best of it—in other words, accomplish as much as possible of what he had aimed to accomplish had his life been like other men's. It did not occur to him to mourn over it: that would take nervous energy he needed for his work.

He was sure no woman could take that view. After he had proved to her it must be she would struggle against it. She would resent it, when for him it was only kismet. She would anticipate her grief, lament, rebel, pine. It was not a load for a woman to carry. Manifestly it would

be out of the question to tell her before death came to him.

On the other hand, could he leave a message of his love behind? This would be impossible without explanation of why he had not spoken in life, and the reasons he had found sufficient for not doing it would not satisfy her. If she loved him, she would suffer more to know she had not been allowed to share his anticipation of death than to have anticipated it with him. No, she must never discover either that he knew he was to die or that he loved her. He must maintain to the last the frank, friendly relations that had grown up between them, and she must feel that she had been mistaken if she had thought he meant to cross the boundary. That was settled.

VII

There was, however, a detail that caused him anxiety. He had savings in the bank amounting to some thirty-five hundred dollars, and he wanted the money to go to Judith. That was not easily managed. He could not bequeath it to her, of course. In the first place she would not accept money any more than she would take a kiss from one to whom she was not at least formally engaged. In the second place, such a bequest would cause comment. In the third place, he had second and third cousins in Iowa with just enough interest in him to try to break his will if he left enough to pay the lawyers' fees. No, he must get the money to her before his death, so that there would be no estate to fight over. But how?

Before he reached home he had solved

the problem. Judith was the daughter of a Unitarian clergyman, and at his death came into property that had fallen to him at the death of her mother. It wasn't a great deal, beyond the homestead that a Concord architect might have built and an old-fashioned flower-garden; she had to live closely to maintain her home and her little charities. But the inheritance included a tenement house which her father had taken over to save a second mortgage he had imprudently lent upon. The proceeds had never paid the interest on the bank mortgage with taxes and repairs, and the property was a burden on her hands. She had tried in vain to sell it.

So it was simple enough. Caleb would withdraw his money from the bank in small sums that would cause no comment, go to a reputable real estate agent

in Ipswich where he was not known, under a false name engage this agent to purchase the property at thirty-five hundred dollars more than the bank mortgage, which would be left undisturbed, and then disappear from the transaction. Judith would be rid of the property and would have his thirty-five hundred dollars; and the nominal owner not appearing and not paying interest on the mortgage the bank would foreclose. It was really an ingenious solution of the difficulty, and we may anticipate enough to say that it was carried out successfully.

VIII

Curiously enough, at church next morning the rector's text was, "Thou fool, this night shalt thy soul be required of thee".

Caleb had the highest regard for this clergyman, to whom minister still meant

servant, who would share his last dollar or his last crust or, far greater sacrifice, his dearest hour with any one who seemed to need it. Usually his sermons were helpful. He had a broad, cheerful, generous grasp of life, and while he was devout he was never sanctimonious. He was a man Caleb liked to shake hands with, and that was saying considerable. But today Caleb could not follow him. Why put so much emphasis on getting into heaven? That was a good place to be if one belonged there, but suppose one didn't? In college he had known adventurous fellows who made their way into companies where they had not been invited, taking a chance on being detected and put out. Wouldn't it be very much like that to sneak into heaven without preparation for it?

Caleb had been brought up an Episco-

palian, he had been confirmed, he had always followed the usages of the church, and though not strong on creeds had never doubted that his soul was immortal and that he was of the elect. He had never speculated much as to details. He felt sure there would be plenty of work over there as there had been here, and he was ready to take it up, whatever it might prove to be, and do his best at it, relieved that it would be directed so that there would not be so much effort wasted as there had been here—witness all those envelopes of memoranda. He could not get quite the point of view of those who sang, "Will there be any stars in my crown?" Stars in his crown! he didn't expect any crown. All he hoped was to be received undistinguished in the multitude of those ready to serve the Lord. .

He had never spent much time in self-communion. He had had lapses, serious ones, of which he was thoroughly ashamed, but he had not agonized over them. He had studied to see what had been the first steps downward and had striven to avoid them next time, but otherwise his effort had been to drive them out of his mind, to be replaced by struggle to do something worthy. He liked Browning's judgment of men by what they did, not by what they had refrained from doing perhaps from lack of courage to do it. He was not so much interested in what he was as in what he accomplished.

So now that he was brought within a measured distance of death it did not occur to him to make any special effort to assure his salvation. His three months would be very much what they would have

been had a cure been promised. He had heard the story of Wesley, who was asked what he would do if it had been made known to him that he should die the next morning, and who had replied something like, "Why, I should preach here this forenoon, ride to Ashcroft for afternoon service, conduct an evening service at Beecham, go straight to bed, and wake up tomorrow morning in Paradise." Caleb saw no reason why he should change the work laid out for these three months, except that it would be more intensive because the time was limited. He meant to strive up to the last minute.

IX

So he was never more cheerful than in these three months. He was more earnest. One afternoon he had walked home from school with Eulalia Nash, a nice girl given

to gushing, and had urged her to be less demonstrative, pointing out that in conduct as in speech it is the reserve behind expression that counts most. He had put the matter tactfully, but he had thrown such soul into it that when she got home Eulalia said to her mother, "I love Mr. Doane so it makes me cry to think of him." But while his pupils felt without understanding it a certain wistfulness in his relations with them, they suspected no change in his relations to life. They used him as an illustration that the best men were the happiest.

X

As the fifteenth of May approached he grew occasionally apprehensive that the crisis would come too soon. The pressure upon his throat increased, and he sometimes went to bed doubting whether he should

survive the night. But on the whole he respected the great physician's prediction, and he planned for the thirteenth as if it were a certainty.

When the evening came he felt confident he could go through it, and as he walked upon the platform he was able to dispel any thought of his approaching fate and give all his attention to the programme. The hall was packed. He had never seen together so many representative people, both teachers and citizens. To his surprise he saw Judith Goss there. She was not a teacher and she had no friends here she could be visiting. She must have come from Albertsville expressly to hear him. It gratified him and put him the more upon his mettle. She gave him the final motive to do his absolute best.

The opening exercises were brief, and

when he came forward to deliver his address the audience was still alert and anticipating. He had put all his possibilities into the forty minutes. He had got together all that seemed worth saying and found that it would occupy three hours. Then he had gone over it again and again to see what entire topics could be omitted, and halved it. Then he had taken each topic remaining and cut out all that could be spared, and pared it down to an hour. Then came the struggle to omit still a third and yet leave the presentation stronger than before. This accomplished, he had gone over every paragraph, every sentence, every word, till he had in mind not only all he intended to say, but variations which he might use if the mood of the audience warranted.

The mood of the audience warranted

more than he had hoped. He had no need of notes and he looked his hearers straight in the eyes. He caught them from the first sentence, and before he was quarter through he felt the response that puts the speaker at his best. When he was begging teachers to respect the individuality of their pupils, and pleaded, "Who of you, for the apple and pear and peach and cherry trees growing up in your schools, for the occasional quince and persimmon, for the oak and the maple and the poplar and the willow and here and there the palm, would substitute the uniform whittled-out, disc-based, hand-painted, imitation trees of your own Noah's ark?" the applause lasted so long he made two ineffectual attempts to start again before he was allowed to go on. What delighted him most was that when it was through

and they crowded around him to congratulate him, they did not say, "What a fine speaker you are, Mr. Doane," or "That was the most eloquent address I ever listened to," but, "I never saw it quite that way before but you are right," or, "Mr. Doane, I am going back to my school to see my pupils in a new light." He had really struck home; he had given help.

Last of those who came up to him was Judith Goss. She put her hand in his and looked up to him and said with moist eyes, "I am not surprised, Mr. Doane, but I am deeply gratified. It was a noble address."

Though others were waiting for her he felt she half expected him to accompany her to her barding-place, but he did not offer to do so. He was too excited after the effort he had made to be certain he

could maintain the reserve to be kept between them. So he did not even hold or press her hand, but when she went away, looking on her for the last time, he felt a longing that tested his iron self-mastery. After all it was better so. That lump in his throat was pressing more and more. The effort of talking so long had been trying, and must have somewhat hastened the end. He wanted to go over the written draft of the address in his room, and make the changes which the inspiration of his audience had suggested. It was to be published in the *Educational Review*, and it must be at its best.

XI

He had not felt sure of surviving the night, but in the morning his throat was less troublesome and he got through the proceedings without difficulty that the

audience discovered. When all was over he went to the station with the others, but instead of returning took the train for New York, saying he had business there. He knew the end was near, and he went as had been arranged to the Presbyterian hospital. During the evening the physician called and Caleb suggested to him, "Suppose I keep notes from now on as long as I am able of every change in my condition. Would that be of some help?"

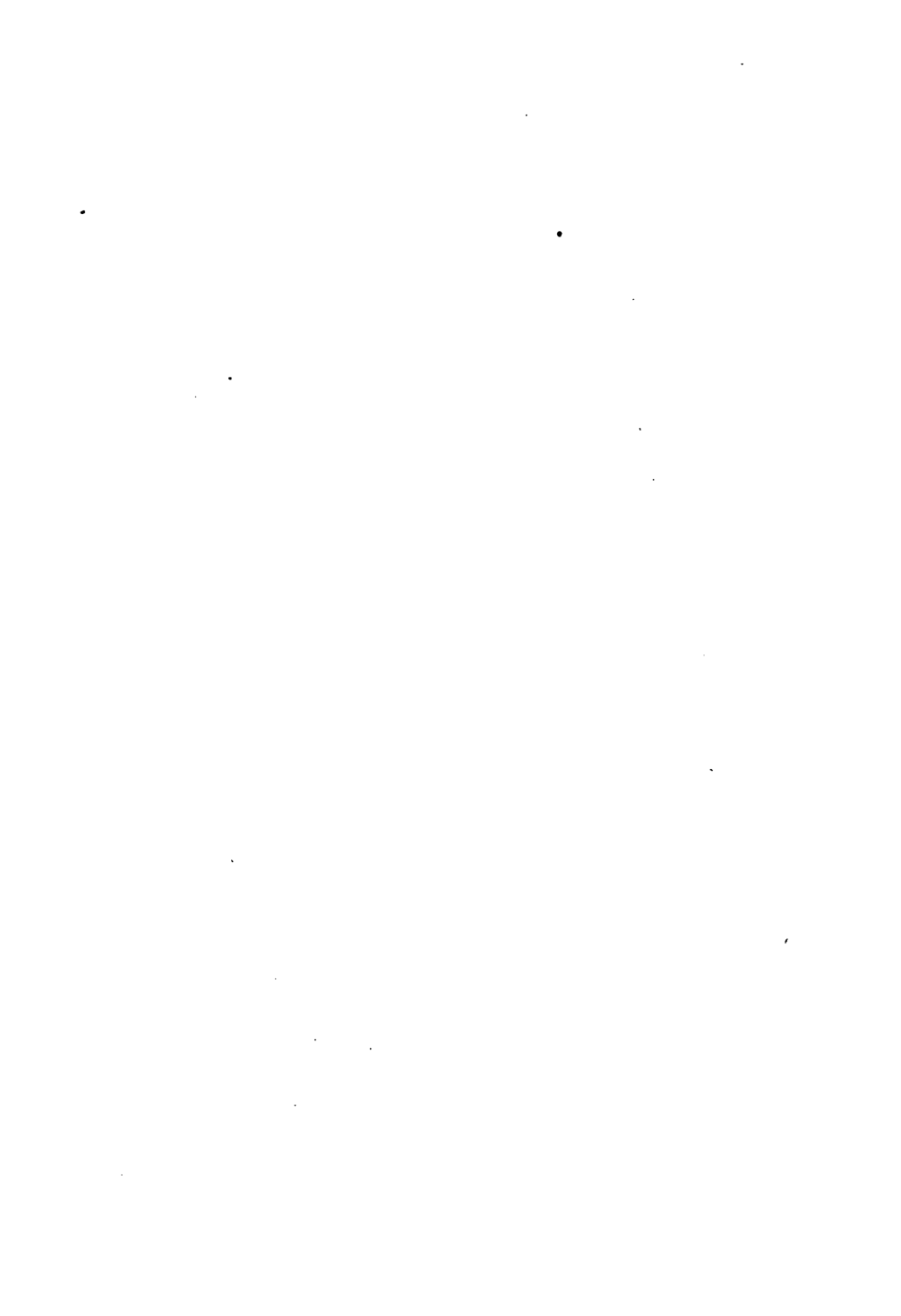
"Of great help," the doctor replied. "I am sure they would be trustworthy."

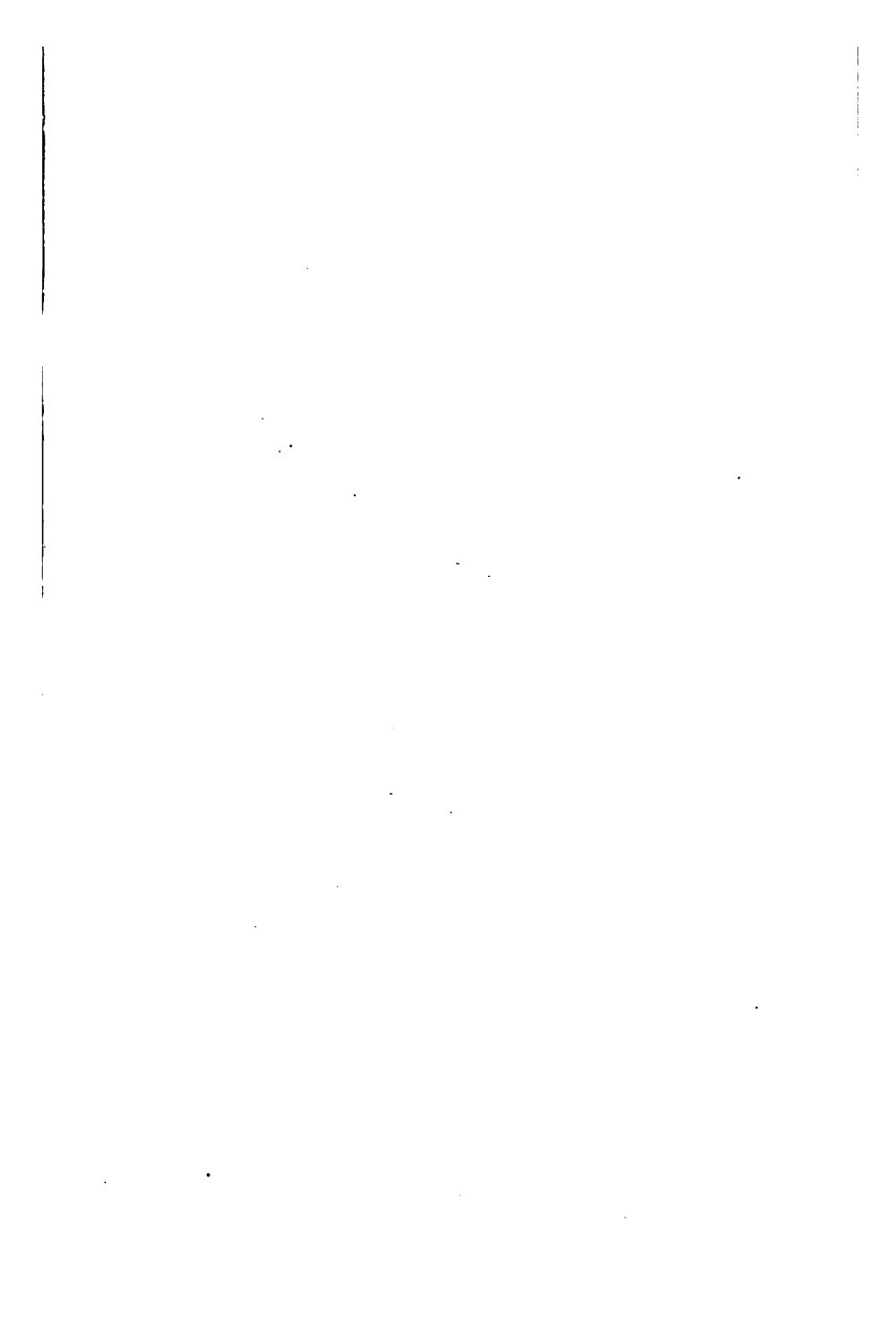
So Caleb felt that even his last moments were not useless. He had brought with him a volume of Browning, which he read, as he did his prayer-book, the latter aloud, as its sonorousness had always delighted and comforted him. Now that he was

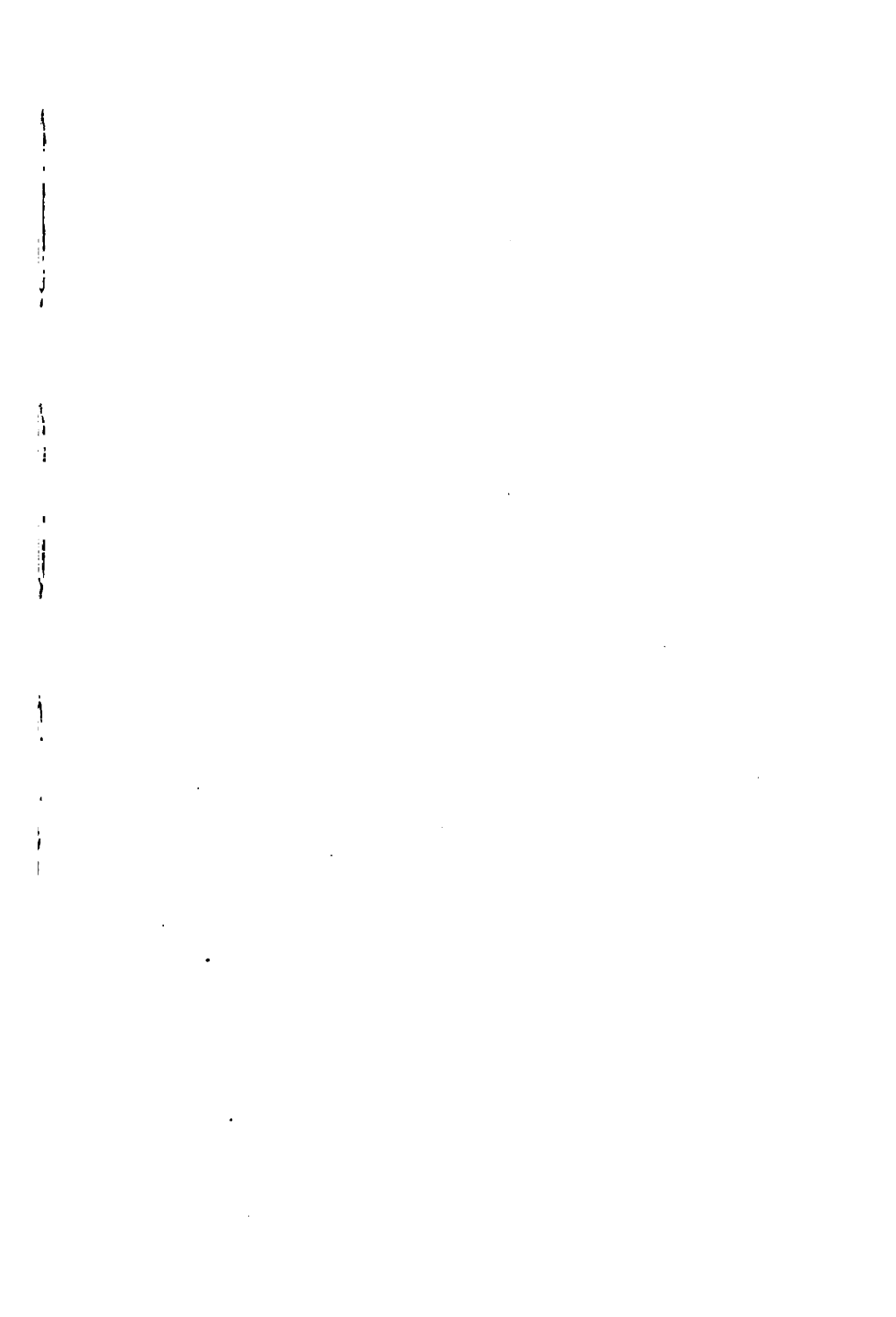
on the brink he made some notes of speculation as to details of the life to come, but these he destroyed. "There is no basis of fact in them," he said to himself, "and they might steer wrongly any one who happened to read them."

But he kept up his diary. His last entry was on May 17, "8:10 a. m. The pressure suddenly increases. I gasp with diffi—"

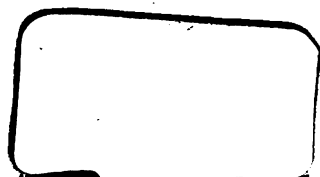
The nurse found him with the fountain pen still in his hand. The end had come in the middle of the word.





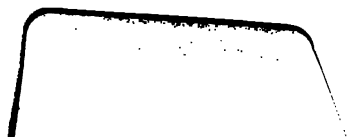






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the 1990s, the incidence of *S. flexneri* infections in the United Kingdom has increased [10]. In the United States, *S. flexneri* has been reported as the most common serotype of *Shigella* isolated from patients with shigellosis [11]. In the United Kingdom, *S. flexneri* is the most common serotype isolated from patients with shigellosis [12]. In the United States, *S. flexneri* is the most common serotype isolated from patients with shigellosis [11]. In the United Kingdom, *S. flexneri* is the most common serotype isolated from patients with shigellosis [12].

The purpose of this study was to determine the prevalence of *S. flexneri* in the United Kingdom. The study was conducted in the United Kingdom, where *S. flexneri* is the most common serotype isolated from patients with shigellosis [12]. The study was conducted in the United Kingdom, where *S. flexneri* is the most common serotype isolated from patients with shigellosis [12].

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